T. YAKOVLEV, S. GEGUZIN

WHAT THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION GAVE THE PEASANTS

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE
Moscow 1957

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ЧТО ДАЛА ОКТЯБРЬСКАЯ РЕВОЛЮЦИЯ КРЕСТЬЯНАМ

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN
BY GEORGE H. HANNA

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PAGES FROM THE BITTER PAST

"Bitter sorrow haunted the hills,
Bitter sorrow barred the gates."

(Old Russian saying)

Yefim Vasilyevich Yeroshin, peasant farmer of the village of Koltsovka in Chuvashia, is 86 years old. He was born in this village where his father and his grandfather (the latter a serf) tilled the soil before him. He is a member of a collective farm and as such is entitled to receive a pension from the collective which would enable him to live at ease. He will not, however, listen to the advice and persuasion of his fellow-farmers to take it easy in his old age. He says he likes his job, night-watchman in the farm's office. But then, night-watchman isn't the right word for the job. Late in the evening, when everybody else has left the office, it is Yefim Vasilyevich that answers all telephone calls. He knows everything and everybody and can deal with whatever comes his way.

"The night-chairman," his fellow-farmers call him.

The younger villagers often look in as they pass late at night and see the lighted window of the office—youngsters going home from the club or from the evening school that is close by. The rising generation of Koltsovka like listening to the old man's tales of the past and he also finds pleasure in the merry young faces of his attentive audience. On many occasions the oldest inhabitant of Koltsovka has been asked to tell stories of the distant past to interested audiences of children and young people.

The tall, grey-bearded old man slightly roundshouldered stands in the middle of a close circle of young people.

"In those days," he begins, "the land didn't belong to those who tilled it but to one man, the landowner Ushakov. He could do whatever he liked with the peasants. There were twelve mouths to feed in our family and we had less than four acres. We never had enough bread. We used a wooden plough, there were only two iron ploughs in the whole of Koltsovka. You can't plough very deep and you can't work a lot with such a plough. How bitter was the bread we earned by the sweat of our brow and by the bleeding callosities on our hands! You can't imagine what our wives put into the flour to eke it out—grated bark from the trees, chaff and other refuse from the threshing-floor. You wouldn't dream of eating such bread today, but the village boys of my time were glad enough to get a lump of that and it seemed like cake to us because the poor villagers seldom had enough bread to last until the spring flood."

This was the case in Koltsovka and in all the countless villages and hamlets of the Russian provinces, in all those Gorelovkas, Neyelovkas, Neurozhaikas and Razutovkas* of which the great Russian poet Nekrasov writes in his wonderful *Who Lives Well in Russia.*

Until the sixties of the last century serf labour predominated in the Russian countryside. A census taken about the middle of the 19th century recorded some twenty-three million men and women serfs who were the property of the landowners. They were spoken and written of as chattels—peasants so and so, the property of landowner X. The peasant and his entire family were, in practice, the property of the landowner who could treat them as chattel slaves: he could exchange them for dogs, buy and sell them, lose them at cards or make a gift of them to somebody else. The aristocrats of the Kiev and Podolsk provinces owned a million serfs in each province. The

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* Imaginary names of villages coined by the poet from the Russian words for burnt-out, underfed, crop-failure and shoeless.—*Tr.*

landowners of the Volhynian, Tula, Smolensk, Tambov, Tver, Nizhny-Novgorod, Kursk, Saratov, Moscow, Yaroslavl and other provinces had in each case between 750,000 and 1,000,000 serfs.

The system of serfdom hampered the development both of agriculture and of industry. The compulsory labour of the serfs and the primitive techniques employed could not ensure high productivity. To develop the country economically the Tsar's government was compelled to put an end to this system. To economic necessity must be added the fear of the growing peasant ferment, those spontaneous outbursts when the peasants strove to seize the landowners' land and rid themselves of serfdom. In the end the Tsar's government realized that if serfdom was not abolished from above it would be abolished from below, by the peasants, who would overthrow the power of the landowning class.

At the time of the reforms abolishing serfdom the landowners plundered the peasants ruthlessly: they took for themselves the best of the land that the peasants had formerly tilled for their own use. The government of landowners maintained by the autocratic Tsar and the officials appointed by them, so manipulated the reform, said Lenin, that when the peasants gained their freedom they had been robbed of everything they had. Although they ceased to be the legal slaves of the landowners they were still in their clutches.

The aristocratic landowners managed to grab more than one-fifth of the land formerly used by their peasants. For the land that remained the peasants had to pay enormous sums by way of purchase and until these sums were paid in full the former serfs were regarded as being "temporarily bound." They were compelled to do feudal corvée service, that is, till the land of the landowner without pay, or they were compelled to leave the land and work to pay for it and in addition were subject to heavy taxation. The price of the worst land, that which was left for the peasants, was set at almost double the market price. Up to 1905 the peasants had already paid almost 2,000 million gold rubles for their land. In the words of the

poet, "many new chains were invented to replace those of the serf."

After the formal abolition of serfdom the biggest owners of land were still the same princes, counts and barons. Let us imagine ourselves in the place of a traveller who crossed the Russian black-earth region half a century ago, going from district to district of the Ryazan, Tula, Orel, Tambov, Penza, Voronezh and Kursk provinces.

On the old Ryazan Highway, a couple of miles from Ribny, we come across a huge tract of cultivated land with no hedges; beyond it a stud farm and rich grasslands along the River Vozha.

"Whose property is this?"

"It belongs to Mr. Radzewicz, he's the landlord."

We move on until we reach the River Oka. On the bank opposite the town of Lgov we see rich water-meadows, country mansions and an establishment for baling hay. We turn to the men, women and young people dressed in homespun linen shirts and bast shoes who are mowing grass with their scythes.

"Who do you work for, good people?"

"We are Khludov's farm-labourers, he's the landlord and he owns the factory."

Leaving behind us the ramshackle cottages of the peasants and the gorgeous mansions of the Princes Kropotkin, Shcherbatov, Saltykov, San-Donato, Golitsyn, Shakhovsky, and Yusupov whose estates covered tens of thousands of acres, we drive on to Tambov Province.

Near the village of Koltyrino, in Shatsky District, we drive through the estate of Princess Volkonskaya. The boundaries of the estate are out of sight for the princess owns 5,700 acres of farmland and a huge park. Still farther on we come to the domains of Count Vorontsov-Dashkov, whose possessions include 48,000 acres of land, a stud farm and a flax-teasing establishment. All round us, on this huge estate, we see ragged, barefooted peasants toiling till they drop, we see them dining off a crust of stale bread and an onion.

When we pass the railway station at Zemechino we come to another estate, that of Princess Dolgorukaya, which

includes sugar-beet plantations, a sugar refinery, a glue factory and watermills. The neighbouring estate belongs to a landowner by the name of Pashkov who has over 68,000 acres in Tambov Province and several thousand more in the neighbouring Province of Penza. Labourers are tilling the land and working in the brickfield, at the oil-presses and cheese factory and are boiling pitch, all to increase the wealth of the exploiter Pashkov.

To the south of the Sury railway station we come to the lands and forests belonging to Prince Vorontsov. He has a number of estates, one of which, Nizhny Shkaft, covers an area of 139,600 acres. A whole administrative district is his private property.

Stakhovich, the Marshal of the Nobility of Orel Province, Master of the Horse of the Imperial Household, is the owner of a huge area of the best lands in Yelets District.

From the Sinezerka-Brosovo railway we take our seats in a carriage and drive for a whole week, every day asking:

"Where are we?" and in reply we learn that we are on the estate of His Royal Highness the Grand Duke Mikhail Alexandrovich.

This scion of the royal family owns 271,700 acres!

So it was in every district, in every province. The grand dukes, dukes, princes, counts, barons, titled aristocrats and aristocrats with no titles, factory-owners, enterprising merchants of the higher class—the whole of this predatory gang kept a stranglehold on the working people.

The names of some villages that have been retained to the present day tell an eloquent story. Since the Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow reopened after the war years, visitors from all parts of the Soviet Union find much of interest in the Animal Husbandry Section. One of the most admired exhibits this year was the herd of thoroughbred milch cows from the famous Gorshikha Farm in Yaroslavl Region. Visitors listened to the stories told by the young dairymaids attending the cows and also to Ilya Ivanovich Abrosimov who wore the Order of Lenin and

the Gold Star of a Hero of Socialist Labour on his coat lapel; he was in charge of this "branch" of the farm at the exhibition. Many people asked him why his collective farm bore the name of "Gorshikha" ("Most Sorrowful").

"That's a long story," answered Abrosimov, "but if you're interested I can tell you.

"People come from many parts to visit our farm. They want to see our dairy farm, just like they do here at the exhibition, and want to find out how we manage to get from five to six thousand litres of milk from each cow a year. Then they go to look at the piggery and the sheep pens. You've heard of Romanov sheepskin coats, haven't you? Well, our sheep provide the skins. A lot of people are interested in our poultry farm. Our chickens, like our pigs, are white, fine big Leghorns. It's a big farm altogether, the farm buildings and the farmers' cottages are built of brick made in our own brickfields.

"People tell us that our lands are rich and that the name of the village, Gorshikha, doesn't describe either the farm or the life we lead.

"That's true enough. But, you know, there's an old saying that 'you can't throw words out of a song.' The name of our village, Gorshikha, goes back to times long before the Revolution, when there were swamps all round and a few decrepit log-huts huddled together in the forest. The people never had enough to eat and there was no milk even for the children. The name Gorshikha came from the sorrowful nature of the land—you couldn't think of anything more sorrowful—and from the life of toil and sorrow led by the peasantry."

In old Russia, 30,000 of the biggest landowners possessed about 188,500,000 acres of land, as much as was owned by ten million peasant farmsteads. Members of the royal family owned over 18,850,000 acres of land.

Dolbekino, one of the estates of the Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich, covered 46,200 acres, from which His Royal Highness obtained an annual net income of 130,000 gold rubles. The peasants of Dolbekino owned land which

amounted to a little over two acres per head. In a good year they had bread enough to last them till Christmas. The steward of the estate, a tsarist general, squeezed the peasants off their farms, robbing them of the last handful of earth. And who was there to protect the poor man in those days? The courts? Only aristocrats sat in the courts and it was by a court decision that even the village streets were ploughed up. In the end all the land that had belonged to the peasants became the property of the Grand Duke.

Rich landowners were able to perform any illegal act with impunity since the courts were always on their side. The landowner Komstadius seized illegally the grasslands of the peasants in the village of Zhukli, Sosnitsky District, Chernigov Province. The peasants appealed to the county court. The following is the decision taken by that body:

"In view of the fact that the suit was submitted by illiterate representatives, Stepan and Isáac Ustimenko ... the said suit will not be examined but will be returned to the aforementioned representatives."

In our time, not only a schoolboy, but even a middle-aged person finds it difficult to believe that one individual could own a whole district and that the entire population worked for him. In the old days, however, the big landowners were the dominant class in Russia. The courts and the police were on their side and handled the common folk accordingly. The hungry peasant saw plenty of untilled land around him but he dared not touch it for it belonged to the "master." In the Kirsanov District of Tambov Region, there are still old people living who remember Reitern-Obolenskaya, the woman who owned all the land and from whom the peasants were compelled to rent a few acres because their own holdings were insufficient to feed them and because they had nowhere to pasture their cows. Reitern-Obolenskaya had a glass tower built on the roof and sat there with a telescope watching the labourers at work. Woe betide anybody whom she saw sitting down to take a rest or leaving his work for a drink of water.

In those days the *Peasant Song* was compiled by the people:

Oh, how great is the anguish and sorrow
Of the farmer with no land to till;
But the master is happy and gleeful
For the labourer submits to his will.
If we don't want to die of starvation,
To the master to work we must go,
That the masters who live on our labour
The real meaning of work shouldn't know.

In 1905 this dolorous song of the peasants was printed as a leaflet and distributed by the Bolsheviks working in an underground organization at Kramatorsk.

Pyotr Ivanovich Azhirkov, Hero of Socialist Labour and Chairman of the Borets (Fighter) Collective Farm in Bronnitsy District, Moscow Region, has published a book entitled *Our Collective Farm* which has been translated into English. Azhirkov in his youth was a labourer on the estate of a big landowner and in speaking of this part of Russia in pre-revolutionary days he says the following:

"Before the Revolution Rybolovo was included in Bronnitsy District, Moscow Gubernia. People used to say of us: 'Vereisk peasants have sufficient grain to last them till Easter, Zvenigorod peasants have enough till Shrovetide, Bronnitsy peasants till Christmas.' This was true, by January our peasants had no grain left....

"Those were hard times. We could not eke out a living from the little land we had. The kulaks had the best land and much of the peasants' land was so wedged in between the landlords' estates that it was almost impossible to work it. Most of the land on our side of the river belonged to Prince Gorchakov. Across the river lay the estates belonging to General Volkovsky, the Danilovsky Monastery and the Starnikovo kulaks. Farther off, towards Faustovo, were the rich meadows of Count Orlov-Davidov, an absentee landlord. His stewards auctioned the right to mow his meadows and pasture cattle to the highest bidder, usually the Khryakov kulaks, the Rybolovo hay merchants.

"Few villagers had cows or horses. In order to provide the children with milk, two or three households would club together to keep a cow, each household milking it on certain days.... Often our peasants would mow and stack hay, but they were not allowed to cart it away until the elder had had proof that they had paid all their arrears. They often had to part with their hay.

"The peasants had little seed for sowing, their land was badly tilled and the harvests were poor. Our family would sow four measures of rye (about 2.6 bushels) and we would harvest three, or at most four times the amount we sowed. Our own grain did not last us over the New Year and, willy-nilly, we had to leave home to earn money."

In those days there were many different means by which the landowners could keep the peasant farmers in bondage. The impoverished, unfertilized soil, ploughed with wooden ploughs, could not produce a satisfactory harvest and the grain yield was often so low that nothing was left over for the next year's seed. Dire necessity compelled the peasant to apply to the landowner's steward for assistance, and dearly he paid for it. If he took a measure of rye the whole family had to work to pay for it and, what is more, work at a time when they should have been reaping their own corn. In this way the peasants were kept in permanent debt.

The peasant's cottage was in a state of constant dilapidation, the walls heeled over and the thatch clung precariously to the rafters. The peasant needed timber and there it was, close at hand, but it belonged to the landlord and the peasant was not even allowed to gather sticks for kindling. In order to get a log he again had to become indebted to the landowner. Year after year the peasant worked for nothing on somebody else's land, he could see no end to his bondage and could never be anything but a pauper. When he died his children inherited his debts, living in the same bondage and in dire poverty.

Here is a most brutal document signed by an illiterate peasant woman (that is, she placed a cross under it) who hired herself out as a farm-labourer to Count Pototsky, one of the biggest landowners in Russia:

"I" (name and surname), "have engaged myself voluntarily as a wage labourer on the estate of Count Pototsky for the performance of any farm work that may be given me for a period of 144 days, without maintenance; for the whole of this period I am to be paid 34 rubles of which I have been advanced 10 rubles, the remainder to be paid according to the time I work.

"1. The working day is from sunrise to sunset.

"2. If I leave my work without just cause I must return double the advance irrespective of the number of days worked.

"3. I undertake to go to my work immediately I am called.

"4. If the estate calls me for any kind of work on a Sunday or a holiday I have no right to refuse to work.

"5. If I go away on a working day or a holiday without the permission of the estate I shall be obliged to work off the days on which I have been absent.

"6. If I should be ill or die my family must fulfil this contract."

Such was the contract that made a bondswoman of this poor peasant. Her position was little better than that of a slave, for the contract provided for every contingency so that once the poor woman had placed the yoke of slavery on her shoulders she could never remove it: where could she, who signed the contract because of her poverty, get double the advance to release herself? She knew no holidays and no Sundays, from dawn to dusk she had to toil for His Grace the Count and live in semi-starvation on whatever she could provide herself with. And if the woman were to fall ill on account of the arduous nature of the work or were to die from overstrain, she had already undertaken that her family would work in her place.

Here is another contract, concluded between Prince Golitsyn and the peasants of the village of Matveishchevo, Yuryev District, Vladimir Province, in 1893. The contract reads: "We, the aforementioned peasants, undertake to attend to work at the first call of the Sima office and to fulfil all work assigned conscientiously and should it

be shown that any job has not been conscientiously fulfilled we shall be collectively liable to a fine of 100 rubles to be paid into the office of Prince Golitsyn...."

People born in Soviet times and even those who are well over forty years old do not remember the rural authorities and the rural police officer that were the scourge of the people throughout the countryside.

In April 1902, after the peasant disturbances in the south of Russia, one of the leading judicial officials included in a report the following statement made by the peasant Kiyan at a court hearing: "Allow me to tell you something of the unhappy life of a peasant. I must support my father and six motherless children. I have to get my living from a small holding of about two acres and a patch of little more than half an acre in the fields. To pasture cows we have to pay twelve rubles per head to the landlord Kuzminov and to rent a dessiatine (2.7 acres) on which to sow grain we have to pay by harvesting three dessiatines of his land. And all this has to be done by these two hands of mine.... We cannot live like this, we have our necks in a noose. What can we do? We peasants have applied to all authorities. We have been to the rural council, we have been to the land administration, but none of them would see us, there is nowhere we can get help."

The tsarist State Council produced a special law on the hiring of wage labourers for farm work. Among other things it said:

"The labourer must obey the employer and fulfil all his demands implicitly and zealously in accordance with contracted conditions.

"The labourer must behave decently, soberly and respectfully towards his employer, the employer's family and all persons appointed by the employer to supervise the work.

"The labourer must not absent himself without the employer's permission.

"The employer has the right to make deductions from wages for time lost, for careless work, for insolence and disobedience and for any damage done to his property.

"Deductions for absence from work must not exceed double the wages that would have been paid for the time lost."

This truly Draconic law meant nothing more nor less than the most brutal exploitation and bondage for the poorer section of the peasantry. The landowner, his steward or members of his family had only to accuse the labourer of insufficient zeal, indecency, disrespect or disobedience in order to make deductions from his already miserly wages.

The landowner could rob the labourer right and left with impunity, since the labourer was nothing more than a slave. If he queried the accuracy of his wages or raised an objection to illegal deductions he would land in prison. In the Code of Punishments that could be inflicted by a magistrate's court there was an article to the effect that a farm-labourer could be placed under arrest for a period not exceeding one month for insolence to his employer or members of his employer's family and also for flagrant disobedience of any order given by the employer or any overseer appointed by him. The same term of imprisonment could be inflicted on him "for absence from work or for leaving work without permission in the event of his not fulfilling the legal demand of the police to return to work."

The landed aristocracy kept the peasants in bondage, exploited them ruthlessly until they were ruined and forced to go begging. These titled exploiters themselves lived in fabulous luxury and idleness, maintained stables and kennels at the expense of the peasants, fed crowds of "clients," held banquets and garden parties and visited health resorts abroad. In one night they could lose at cards the fruits of the labours of thousands of people.

Whenever the peasants, driven to despair, demanded that their lives be made easier, whenever they made any attempt to claim their rights, punitive expeditions were sent against them, they were shot, beaten up or publicly birched, no difference being made for age or sex.

In 1902 the newspaper *Iskra* reported that a punitive party led by the chairman of the rural council, Kovalko,

had fired on peasants in the village of Kovalevka. Three were killed outright and amongst the wounded there were three women and a boy. "Not content with the blood spilled in Kovalevka," continues the newspaper, "on 3rd April, 30 people were flogged with knotty withies. The skin was injured by the first blows. The people were beaten till they were unconscious, water was poured on them to revive them and they were beaten again. Some were beaten to death. No count was made of the number of strokes given, each was beaten till he could stand it no more."

On April 15, 1902, the Governor of Kharkov Province reported to the Minister of the Interior that three hundred peasants on the Alexeyev estate had been surrounded and punished on the spot.

The Governor of Podolsk Province, in a report to the Minister of the Interior dated 19th April, 1902, describes with forthright cynicism that he found it necessary "to give the floggings a solemn character in order to make a swift and lasting impression on the population."

"In Maximovka and the following places," he reports, "both before and after the floggings I admonished the peasants briefly but with feeling and the response was universal which is undoubted evidence of the impression created." This is followed by the executioner's very original diary:

"On 1st April floggings were administered in the villages of Chutovo and Voinovka, those in Chutovo being carried out with great solemnity in the presence of a large crowd....

"As the convoy approached the Svinkovo farms, some two versts from the estate of Wilhelm Trepke, near the village of Kovalevka, the Chairman of the Rural Council noticed a huge concourse of people.... The commander of the convoy ordered one platoon of soldiers to fire with the result that two people were killed and seven wounded one of whom died later....

"On 4th April I visited the villages of Cherkasovka and Paraskovyevka where floggings were administered (52 people were punished).

"...From Koshmanovka I proceeded to the Bazilev District.... I immediately ordered floggings with the necessary admonition.

"...Next day, 9th April, I left for Varvarovka in the early morning.... Here 75 people were punished in the presence of a huge crowd."

This is a terrible document telling of the complete absence of political rights for the oppressed classes of Russia, where every policeman or police sergeant, every civil servant, every "well-born" aristocrat could use his hands as he pleased, could imprison those he found inconvenient, drive them off their land and rob them of their last sheep.

In the material gathered by the poet Nekrasov there is something in the nature of a confession made by a captain of the gendarmerie engaged in collecting tax: "...there is nothing pleasant in diving into an old woman's box where she keeps her best dress and the linen for her shroud, taking away part of her house or her only cow and watching the children hanging on to it, their bread-winner.... But you have to put up with it, you have to be brutal.... And criminals? You may know he's innocent, but you've got to send him to Siberia."

On Sunday, 30th June, 1912, the working-class daily, *Pravda*, carried a story from Nizhny-Novgorod headed "The Question of the Samovars," which said that at an extraordinary meeting of a district rural administration there had been a lively discussion on this question. The rural administration drew attention to the fact that in taking inventories of peasants' property prior to confiscating their things for unpaid taxes, the police placed the peasant's samovar first on the list. The water available in the villages, however, was often so bad that it couldn't be drunk unboiled. The administration had raised the question—is the samovar owned by the peasant an article of primary necessity and as such not subject to confiscation? - A member of the provincial court stated that if samovars be exempted from confiscation the amount gathered for unpaid taxes would suffer greatly...."

A word about samovars. The samovar would bubble merrily only on the bigger holidays and then not in every cottage. Tea and sugar were unobtainable luxuries. Even salt was not always to be found in the home of a poor family. No wonder the tsarist censor, Lebedev, in a report to the Press Department on a fragment of Nekrasov's *Who Lives Well in Russia* that was never published in those days, said that it included *The Song of the Salt* which told of a peasant mother who wept salt tears on to a piece of bread to save her dying child as there was no salt in the house.

Poverty, sickness and dire need followed fast on the heels of the peasant and there was no chance of his getting away from them. Families, villages, districts and whole provinces suffered from hunger.

In 1911, during the famine that ravaged the Trans-Volga Region, Vladimir Lenin wrote: "Again famine.... The peasants are selling their land, cattle, everything they can for a song. They are selling their girls, the most evil days of slavery are returning.... The peasants have now been plundered ... plundered to such an extent that they are swelling from hunger, they are eating goosefoot, they are eating lumps of clay instead of bread, they are sick with scurvy and are dying in torment."

In the records of Saratov Province documents have been preserved that tell of the unhappy life of those who tilled the soil in the Trans-Volga Region in pre-revolutionary days. "The district has no future," said the newspaper *Vestnik Novouzenskogo Zemstva* in 1912. "The average harvest is eleven poods to the dessiatine (about 160 lbs. to the acre)."

Since they could not count on getting a big enough harvest from their own land the poor peasants, ofter whole villages and districts, went elsewhere in search of work. Before the Revolution 65 per cent of all peasant farms came under the heading of "poor peasants." In other places, however, they found that life was no sweeter.

There were many who sought their fortunes in distant unsettled places. They went to Siberia, or to the Urals where there was plenty of land, and where the peasants

hoped they would be able to live decent lives. In these places, too, disappointment awaited them. There were many families that left their native parts only to lose their few belongings and to be turned into beggars. Statistics for 1902 show that in that year 8,796 settlers arrived in Altai Province, of which 4,793 left again as they were unable to make a living.

In answer to an application made by the Rural Administration of Chernigov, asking for the "regulation of resettlement," the government said that "it was not deemed possible to hand out valuable government lands to satisfy temporary and incidental needs."

The whole of the land in Altai Province was the property of the Tsar and was administered by the Land Office in the name of the autocrat. How could a farm-labourer or a poor peasant hope to get even a tiny patch of fertile land from that bloodsucker?

When he had overcome the countless adversities that lay in his way and finally reached his destination, the settler could reckon only on himself: he could not hope for help from anybody or anywhere. Many of the settlers did not even have a steel plough to turn up the virgin soil that was as hard as rock. In those distant days the word "settler" was very near to meaning "unfortunate," a man who was in trouble.

In an article, "Settlement Question," published in 1912, Lenin wrathfully exposed the policy of the tsarist government who had abandoned the settlers to their own devices without any consideration for their interests or for the interests of those who were there before them. "They, the settlers," wrote Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, "left for Siberia in unsuitable cattle-trucks tightly packed with people, including the aged, children and expectant mothers. In these cattle-trucks (bearing the notorious inscription 40 men or 8 horses) the settlers had to cook their food and wash their clothes, often there were people lying there ill with infectious diseases whom the settlers usually kept hidden from the authorities for fear that they would be taken off the train and would remain behind the party....

"After experiencing such martyrdom on the way to 'the promised land' the poorest settlers do not find happiness in Siberia."

There was no way out for the landless peasant, no way out of poverty and hunger, no way out of that wretched nightmare of a life.

What gave the peasants strength to throw off the yoke of exploitation by the landowners, to become the masters of their own fate and make their age-old dream come true—to get land and liberty?

Their strength lay in the Great October Socialist Revolution, carried out by the working class in alliance with the poorest of the peasantry and under the leadership of the Communist Party. In October 1917, for the first time in history, the working people succeeded in taking power into their own hands in order to build up a society in which there would be neither oppression nor exploitation. And the name of this new society is socialism.

THE WAY PROVED RIGHT IN PRACTICE

> "Life is the best teacher and will show who is right...."
>
> *V. I. Lenin*, "Report on Land at the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets." 8th November, 1917.

The Winter Palace has been captured. The last bulwark of the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government of the bourgeoisie and landowners has fallen. The October Socialist Revolution is victorious. On the wide marble staircase of the palace there are still traces of the recent struggle: broken stone and brick, empty machine-gun belts and empty cartridges are lying about. At the foot of the staircase stand two men: a worker in a cap and leather jacket with a red armband on his sleeve and a rifle slung over his shoulder and a bearded soldier in puttees and greatcoat with a haversack on his back, a water-bottle at his belt and a rifle in his hand, in whom it is not difficult to recognize a peasant. The soldier is lighting a cigarette from that of the worker. These two men, the worker and the peasant in uniform, are standing at the entrance to the palace where the sound of battle has just died down, a battle in which they have taken part. Their faces express the calmness and determination of those who have done well.

This well-known picture by V. Serov has very expressively recorded, as only a great work of art can, one of the historic moments of the Socialist Revolution; it shows how, in October 1917, the workers and peasants fought for a common cause.

From the October Socialist Revolution emerged a state of a new type, a state of workers and peasants. From then on

the factories and mills, mines and railways, the land and all it contains became the property of the working people.

In Room 10 at the Central Lenin Museum in Moscow, where documents and articles of interest telling of the great days of the October Socialist Revolution are collected, is the pen with which Vladimir Lenin signed the historical Decree on Land on 8th November, 1917, thus accomplishing that for which many generations had striven, for which many of the best people of Russia had gone to prison or spilt their blood.

The age-old yearning of the peasants for land of their own had come true. The Decree on Land embodied the aspirations and hopes of millions for it was compiled on the basis of 242 recommendations made by peasants at meetings in the villages. The first article of the decree reads: "The landlord system of land tenure to be abolished immediately and without repayment." The landowners' estates, all lands belonging to the royal family, the monasteries and churches ,together with all machines and draught animals, farm buildings and other appurtenances were placed at the disposal of the district land committees and the District Soviets.

More than 403,000,000 acres of land went to the peasants. Everything contained in the earth—oil, coal, ores and other mineral wealth—as well as forests and water resources were declared the property of the people.

The countryside was relieved of the heavy burden of rent and expenditure for the purchase of land that had ruined the peasantry. The landlords had formerly received a total of 700,000,000 gold rubles a year for rent and redemption payment. Soviet power also cancelled peasants' debts to the Land Bank which amounted to 1,300 million gold rubles.

The Decree on Land opened up a new era in the lives of peasants by abolishing the regime that held them in bondage to the avaricious landowners, kulaks and money-lenders.

The world's first state of workers and peasants began to administer the land in the interests of the people. The huge landed estates in old Russia had been ruthlessly

exploited to ensure the greatest possible profit. The land was tilled by primitive methods and huge areas that required either irrigation or draining lay unused; over 40 per cent of the total land fund had not been studied and its characteristics were unknown. Of the 2,959 million acres of ploughlands and grasslands officially registered only 457.3 million were in use, so that the mass of the peasantry either had miserly holdings or no land at all while huge expanses of land lay unused.

Under the new, Soviet system, when the idlers had been turned out and the land that had been an evil stepmother to the people had become their source of livelihood, there were opportunities for a prosperous life such as had never before been known, and the long-suffering, backward and cowed peasantry were able to develop their abilities and talents and put their initiative to good use.

Lenin concluded his report on the Land Decree to the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets with the following words that were drowned in thunderous applause:

"The point is that the peasants should be firmly assured that there are no more landlords in the countryside, that they must themselves arrange their own lives."

The peasants were convinced and they began to arrange their own lives for themselves; Committees of the Poor were set up in the countryside and these organized the distribution of grain and farm implements and helped the local food authorities in confiscating surpluses in possession of the kulaks. With the help of the Committees of the Poor 123,500,000 acres of land belonging to the kulaks and a considerable part of their agricultural implements were handed over to the poor and middle peasants. The Committees of the Poor were an excellent school for the peasants and they helped the working class strengthen their ties with the middle peasants and win them over to their side, they helped strengthen the alliance of the workers and peasants that had grown up in the revolutionary struggles against their common enemies, the capitalists and landlords.

Old Russia had been called "straw Russia" on account of the poverty of her villages and her technical backward-

ness. The majority of the machinery in use bore the trade marks of foreign firms although talented Russians, engineer-inventors and skilled workers had made great discoveries in various technical fields. The Russian mechanic, Fyodor Abramovich Blinov, for example, almost sixty years ago built the first self-propelled caterpillar tractor, the prototype of the powerful modern machines. Although the country is extremely rich in coal and ores the iron and steel and engineering industries were but poorly developed.

Although old Russia had a larger territory than any other country in the world and for population she took third place after China and India, her industrial output was below that of a number of other countries. Many of the factories, mines and oilfields were concessions granted to foreign companies and banks.

In 1917, on the eve of the October Revolution, Lenin wrote that the question would be raised relentlessly—either perish or overtake and surpass the leading countries economically.

The young Soviet state inherited a heavy burden: a technically backward industry and an ocean of tiny peasant farms equipped with the most primitive implements. There were no factories producing motor vehicles, tractors or mineral fertilizers. There was no electricity in the countryside. The old Russian villages were equipped with 10,000,000 wooden ploughs and 18,000,000 wooden harrows.

Enemies without and within prevented the state from reorganizing the national economy immediately after the Revolution. The defeated bourgeoisie and landowners were not reconciled to their defeat and never gave up hopes of a return to the old order of things. In this they were supported by the capitalists of America, Britain, France, Japan and other countries.

In the Civil War that ensued the workers and peasants suffered untold privations. There was not enough food, clothing or boots. The people, however, gained strength from the knowledge that they were defending the great gains of the October Revolution, that they were fight-

ing in a just cause, fighting for their own factories, their own land. Soviet Russia held her own. The countless enemies were defeated and their remnants driven out of the country.

Despite the terrible shortage of food, fuel, clothing, footwear and medicines, the Communist Party drew up extensive plans to convert Russia into an industrial power, rich in machinery, power stations and other technical equipment.

In the difficult days of 1920 the peasants of the village of Kashino, near Moscow, built a small power station. They invited Lenin to attend the opening ceremony and sent a delegation to him with the following letter:

"On November 14 electric lighting will be opened in the village of Kashino on which occasion we humbly request your presence to share the joy we feel at the sight of electric light in peasant cottages such as peasants did not dare dream of under the Tsar. Your presence is extremely desirable."

Although Lenin was busily engaged on matters of great state importance he went to the village with Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya. The new electric lamps that were lighted in the peasants' cottages that day were beacons illuminating the road to a new life, and they were with all justice called "Lenin's lamps."

In his speech to the peasants of Kashino Lenin said that only when the whole country would have electricity, only when big modern industries would provide equipment for farming and transport, only then would victory be ensured.

A little more than a month after his visit to Kashino Lenin spoke about it at the Eighth All-Russian Congress of Soviets: "A meeting was held in the street and one of the peasants made a speech in which he greeted this new event in the life of the peasantry. 'We peasants,' he said, 'lived in darkness, and now a new light has appeared among us; an "unnatural light" that will illuminate our peasant darkness.' Personally I was not surprised at those words. For the non-Party masses of the peasantry electricity is, of course, 'unnatural,' but for us it is unnatural

that for hundreds and thousands of years peasants and workers should live in darkness and in poverty and oppressed by landlords and capitalists."

The congress adopted the plan for the electrification of Russia, the first long-term plan for the development of the national economy. This plan made provision for the building of twenty steam-driven and ten hydro-electric power stations in the course of ten to fifteen years, the total capacity of which was to be 1.5 million kw., the minimum essential to ensure the development of industry and the socialist transformation of farming.

The Communist Party was fully aware of the aspirations of the peasantry. Lenin had constant meetings with peasants, received messengers from the villages, listened attentively to all they had to say, questioned them and had real heart-to-heart talks with them.

It took the peasant Osip Ivanovich Chernov two months to get from Siberia to see Lenin. The Siberian speaks of his visit to Lenin in the following words: "I remember how Vladimir Ilyich got up and came to meet me as though I were an important visitor. He greeted me heartily and asked:

"'What news have you brought from Siberia?'

"'I've put all my ideas down on paper and I'd like to read it,' I said.

"'Go on, read it,' he answered. 'Sit down.'

"We sat down together, not opposite each other but at the end of the table: he half-turned to look at me.

"When I began to read I could not help watching him, looking straight into his face. At first it seemed that he was bored and tired—his expression seemed to tell me that he was fed up with listening to our reports—but as I got on with my reading there was a noticeable change in his face, he often screwed up his left eye, turned towards me with a jerky movement, half-closed his eyes and peered at me. By the time I came to the end I could see that a question of the greatest importance was being solved in that head, being solved in the course of a few minutes; I saw how much Vladimir Ilyich had grasped in that short time and how firm he was in making his decisions.

"I was speaking of the replacement of compulsory deliveries of farm produce by taxes in Siberia."

In his story this village messenger describes very well Lenin's ability to see the great in the small. He continues in the following way:

"Of course he was not listening to me as an extraordinary individual but through me he was listening to the entire peasantry and through me he considered all the complications of the situation obtaining amongst the rank-and-file peasantry."

The young Soviet Republic went over to peaceful economic development, the Communist Party making every effort to turn life into normal channels in town and countryside. To do this it was necessary to make the peasants interested in increasing the output of farm produce and thus ensure better supplies for the workers. In the spring of 1921 the 10th Congress of the Communist Party adopted a decision to abolish the compulsory deliveries of farm produce that had been necessary during the period of War Communism, the Civil War period, and to introduce a system of taxation; this was part of the New Economic Policy and was effective in bringing about a rapid improvement in farming and at the same time strengthened the bonds between the workers and peasants.

Even before the October Revolution, at the First All-Russian Congress of Peasant Deputies, held in May 1917, Lenin had said that they could not continue farming in the old way, they must learn to till the land in common, hold their implements and cattle in common, employ better implements and work together with agronomists. Only by working the land in common without capitalists and landlords could the land really be in the hands of the working people. If this condition were not fulfilled all talk of free labour on the free earth would not help them.

"Even if there were notices in every district council declaring the land to be free," said Lenin, "things would not be any better as far as the working people are concerned, just as in the West-European republics the prisons

do not cease to be prisons because the phrase 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity' is inscribed on them."

A cooperative movement developed in the countryside in accordance with a plan drawn up by Lenin who regarded cooperation as being the socialist way of uniting peasant farms for their gradual transition to collective ways of working. In order to implement this plan successfully it was necessary for the working class to lead the peasantry and it was necessary to develop a mighty Soviet industry that could technically re-equip the farms.

The famous Ukrainian Zdobudok Zhovtnya Collective Farm in Odessa Region that has been headed for well over thirty years by Hero of Socialist Labour Fyodor Ivanovich Dubkovetsky, a pioneer of the collective-farm movement, was born when the peasants became familiar with Lenin's cooperative plan. The Budyonny Collective Farm, another famous Ukrainian establishment, was born in the same way and has been headed by its talented organizer, Hero of Socialist Labour Makar Anisimovich Posmitny, since 1924 when 30 poor farms in that district united to till the soil together and live a new life.

New relations were formed in the villages and the peasants who had formed cooperatives felt the full strength of joint labour on commonly-owned soil, they learned of the miracle of mutual assistance. This helped them overcome all the difficulties that stood in their way in those early days—shortages of machines and draught animals, seed and fertilizers. It was then that they realized the strength of the old proverb, "United we stand, divided we fall."

The Communist Party and the Soviet Government kept a close watch on the various types of farmers' cooperatives that were set up in the twenties and, what is more important, rendered them every possible assistance. The poor peasants were exempted from the payment of taxes, poor and middle peasants were granted cash credits, received advances of seed and food products, scientific help was given, surveying was done free of charge, etc.

The Communist Party regarded these first cooperatives as the prototype of the big collective farms of the future.

Lenin's cooperative plan became the Communist Party's programme leading millions of isolated peasant farmers on to the road to collectivization.

For the socialist reorganization of agriculture machinery and electricity were needed. In the programme of socialist industrialization to convert backward agrarian Russia into an industrial power, adopted by the 14th Congress of the C.P.S.U. in 1925, priority was given to the development of heavy industry and electricity, the foundation of the whole national economy.

The general line of the Communist Party, the basic Leninist principles of industrialization were not to the liking of those who were far removed from the working class, who did not believe in the strength of the Soviet state, the Trotskyites, Bukharinites and others. There were, of course, the Jeremiahs and people of little faith whose only ambition was for a quiet life, who wanted to import machinery from abroad instead of making it ourselves by building the necessary factories. They wanted us to leave metal alone and produce textiles or, as the saying went at the time, they wanted a "cotton Russia" and not a "metal Russia."

The Soviet people built their factories and mines without usurious foreign loans and without indebting themselves to foreign states—they built with what they could accumulate themselves, consciously accepting temporary privations in the way a man does to build his own house.

We had to start from scratch and build not only tractor and motor plants but also plants to produce the metal to make them from and machine-tools to make them with; and they were built in the wilderness—at the foot of Mount Magnitka in the Urals, near Kuznetsk in Siberia, near Kharkov and Nizhny-Novgorod; everything and everybody had to be mobilized to build them in record time.

The First Five-Year Plan envisaged the building of 518 industrial establishments. Some of these were the Magnitogorsk, Kuznetsk and Krivoi Rog iron and steel mills, the first tractor plants in Stalingrad and Kharkov, motor works in Moscow and Nizhny-Novgorod, the agri-

cultural machinery plant in Rostov-on-Don, and the chemical plant at Bereznyaki.

It was not only factories that grew up—along with them there grew up the cadres of builders of socialism, people who had learned the new techniques and, inspired by the ideas of the Communist Party, had become hardened in the struggle against difficulties.

On June 17, 1930, the first tractor came off the conveyor of the Stalingrad Tractor Plant, and on June 3rd of the same year the Zaporozhye factory turned out the first grain harvester combine; in this way all the factories projected for the First Five-Year Plan were built and put into operation.

Although socialist industry was developing so rapidly, the small and scattered farms with their out-of-date equipment were unable to avail themselves of the advantages of big socialist industry and, consequently, lagged far behind. The national economy could not develop much longer with two such diverse elements—a powerful, united socialist industry and a scattered, petty-producer type of agriculture. The way out of this predicament was found through the uniting of the tiny peasant farms into big cooperatives where the soil was tilled by all in common and where the new machinery provided by socialist industry could be used to advantage.

In the early stages of collectivization the collective farms were formed by simply putting together the land and farm implements of the members within the bounds of existing villages and hamlets. Even these tiny cooperatives showed what advantages they possessed over individual farmers. The peasants of neighbouring villages could see for themselves that the cooperative could do that which was beyond the means of an individual poor peasant. Whether it was a question of ploughing, gathering in the harvest speedily, getting in a stock of fodder for the cattle—whatever work was to be done was done more easily by the collective working on one common field. The machines had room to turn on the bigger fields. The people could see that land ploughed by a tractor in accordance with the advice of an agronomist and sown to select

seed would give a better harvest than the fields of the individual peasants. The great power of example proved to be the best agitator and the number of cooperatives grew rapidly.

With industry developing continuously it became possible to organize big collective farms. The transition began in 1929, when the peasants joined the collective farms in large numbers and opened the road to the new way of life.

Not every peasant, especially the elderly villagers, found it easy to reorganize his entire way of living, it was hard for him to leave his own little field for one that was collectively owned. It was hard for him to take his only horse to the communal stable and submit to an ordered life as laid down by the general meeting of the members. There were, moreover, kulaks in the collective farms. They could feel that the earth was slipping from under their feet and they stopped at nothing to prevent their fellow-villagers from forming collective farms.

The old inhabitants of the village of Timofeyevka in Tambov Region cannot help smiling when they recall how the kulaks tried to scare the people: "The antichrist tractor will come and burn up the village." And the whisper went round that the tractor would ruin the earth, that it would plough so that there would be no harvest and the people would be without bread.

The kulaks not only scared the people with all sorts of fantastic tales but they set fire to cowsheds and granaries, shot down the organizers of the collectives. *Komsomolskaya Pravda* for August 3, 1929, carried a story headed *Fiery Tractor-Driver*. It told of the New Road farmers' commune in Ishim District where a lad named Pyotr Dyakov, a member of the Young Communist League, had been one of the organizers. The commune grew strong despite the fierce resistance put up by the kulaks. "One night," said the newspaper, "when Dyakov was working on the tractor in the commune's fields, he was attacked by a kulak gang. They knocked him down, stripped him and beat him till he lost consciousness and then doused him with kerosene and set fire to him. The young tractor-driver, burning like a torch, lit up the ripening fields of the commune."

It was believed that Dyakov had died from the torture and the poet Ivan Molchanov wrote a song about him. The song said that the kulaks could not only curse and bark to give vent to their spite but that they would try to get at the Komsomol members who were warned to be on their guard; it was very popular amongst the youth in those days.

But Pyotr Dyakov did not die. In that awful night, when the kulaks bound him and set fire to him, he rolled on the ground and beat out the flames. He was picked up by his fellow-villagers and carried half-dead to hospital. For six months he was confined to his bed but his strong, young constitution defeated death.

In June 1957 Pyotr Dyakov, awarded the Order of Lenin for his excellent work in the virgin lands, came from Siberia to take part in the Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow.

None of the intrigues of our enemies, nothing at all on earth, could break the will-power of the toiling peasantry who had decided to live collectively and seek their fortune in collective labour, never again to be in bondage to kulak or landowner.

The collectivization movement that began in 1929 may be likened to a springflood when the rivers throw off the ice that held them bound and spread their waters far over the surrounding countryside.

The following table shows how the number of collective farms grew throughout the country:

	1929	*1930*	*1934*	*1937*
Number of collective farms . . .	57,000	85,900	233,300	243,700
Number of farms united in collectives	1,000,000	6,000,000	15,700,000	18,500,000
Percentage of collectivization				
a) by farms . . .	3.9	23.6	71.4	93
b) by area under cultivation . .	4.9	33.6	87.4	99.1

In February 1933 one thousand and four hundred collective-farm shock workers gathered in Moscow for their first congress. They met to discuss methods of improving collective-farm work and to exchange experiences. This congress was attended by the first organizers of the collective farms, peasant men and women who in this short time had made a name for themselves by their work in the common cause and had won the approval of their fellow-members. In his speech at that congress Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin showed how the old way of life differed from the new, collective-farm, system. "Under the old system the peasants worked singly, following the ancient methods of their forefathers and using antiquated implements of labour; they worked for the landlords and capitalists, the kulaks and speculators; they worked and lived half-starved while they enriched others. Under the new, collective-farm system the peasants work in common, cooperatively, with the help of modern implements—tractors and agricultural machinery; they work for themselves and their collective farms; they live without capitalists and landlords, without kulaks and speculators; they work with the object of raising their standard of welfare and culture from day to day.... The old system leads to capitalism. The new system leads to socialism." There was no third way, and those who thought they could continue as individual petty farmers without the landlords and capitalists were sadly mistaken. Such a system would only have led to their again falling in debt to the kulaks which would have led, in turn, to capitalism. The working peasantry rejected with determination that way of reorganizing life in the countryside, they were solid in their support of the collective farms.

As time went on the collective farms developed and new ways of running them were evolved. The members were divided into brigades or teams, piece-work rates, regular daily quotas and careful accounting of work done were introduced and production plans for each year were drawn up.

The collective farm (or agrarian cooperative) proved

to be the best way of combining communal interests with those of the individual farmers.

The land, according to Soviet law, is granted to the collective farm for use in perpetuity, it cannot be bought and sold or rented out.

The collective farm, as a form of cooperative farming, gives the peasant the greatest opportunity to display his initiative as a farmer, to make good use of his knowledge, experience and organizational ability and, at the same time, take an active part in social life. A sense of responsibility for the well-being of the entire collective, a feeling that he is master of the farm's socialized property has entered into the flesh and blood of the rural working people. The years of life in the collective farm, years of common labour and struggle to raise the farm to a higher level have produced a new man, the builder of socialist society.

On the basis of experience gained by the leading collective farms the Rules of the Agricultural Cooperative were drawn up and were approved by the Second All-Russian Congress of Collective-Farm Shock Workers; it was confirmed by the Soviet Government and the Central Committee of the Communist Party in February 1935.

The Rules, which included the rights and obligations of the farm members, methods of organizing and payment for farm work and methods of farm management, became law in all the farms.

The Rules make provision for the participation of all the members in the management of the collective. The highest governing body of the collective is the general meeting and for the everyday administration of the farm there is the Board of Management. This Board draws the rank-and-file farmers, men and women, into the work of management and into the organization of social life.

The collective farms are closely linked up with the machine and tractor stations (MTS's). At the Shevchenko MTS in Odessa Region an interesting document has been preserved—a contract concluded between the Shevchenko State Farm and the peasants of four neighbouring villages in 1927. The state farm undertook to

cultivate the fields of its neighbours, using its tractors. The contract says: "The peasants will join their fields into one ... continuous field so that all tilling can be done by tractors. All hedges and boundaries marking individual fields will be ploughed under...."

The Odessa tractor column had given the necessary impetus and machine and tractor stations were organized to help the peasants build up the collective farms. By 1933 the number had reached over 7,000. The MTS's brought mechanization to the countryside and by 1938 394,000 tractors were in use.

The MTS is a Soviet state organization offering technical, scientific, political and organizational help to the collective farms and their membership. A prominent part in building up the farms was played by the political departments of the MTS's that were set up to help in the organizational work and in the communist education of the rural population. The best of the urban Communists, skilled organizers and propagandists, were sent to the countryside to work in these political departments. This strengthened still further the bonds between the working people of town and country.

Today there are more than 9,000 MTS's servicing the collective farms. In view of the fact that they are responsible for about three-quarters of all farm work they are the deciding factor in raising harvest yields; they carry the achievements of science and of progressive practical farmers to the collective farms as one of the ways of getting better harvests.

To carry out their tasks effectively the MTS's must be properly staffed with skilled workers; since the September Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, some 23,000 engineers and technicians have been sent from industrial establishments to the countryside; another factor making for greater output is the greater material interest of the MTS workers in the economical use of machinery and higher harvest yields. The total number of skilled workers and engineers in the country's MTS's has now reached the figure of 1,250,000 and a regular system of schools has been

established to train mechanics for the countrysi de. In addition to this 100,000 MTS agronomists and cattle-breeders are employed directly on the collective farms.

As time went on the peasants grew confident of the strength of the collective-farm system and socialist forms of farming eventually ousted all others. At the time of the 18th Congress of the C.P.S.U. in March 1939 there were 18,800,000 peasant families united in the collective farms, 93.5 per cent of all peasant families in the U.S.S.R. By 1938 the area sown to all crops exceeded that of 1913 by almost 79,000,000 acres.

Throughout these years the Soviet state allotted ever larger sums of money to finance the collective farms. During the first two five-year plans capital investments in agriculture amounted to 26,400 million rubles while in the period 1936-40 the state appropriated a total of 55,600 million rubles for agriculture.

The policy of the Communist Party, the policy of industrialization and collectivization, enabled the big collective farms to take advantage of the new techniques and of scientific achievements to increase the productivity of farm labour and ensure a life of well-being for all rural workers. On the big collective farms the more laborious tasks are performed by machinery while the use of electric motors for threshers, seed-sorters and dairy-farm machinery enables the peasants to do their work better and more quickly. The achievements of the agrarian sciences can be effectively used only on large tracts of land.

The war against the fascist invaders interrupted the peaceful labour of the Soviet people and was a severe test for the country. The working class, the collective farmers and the intelligentsia exerted all their efforts to defend the independence of their country and defeat a treacherous enemy. The fascists attacked that which is dearest and most sacred to the Soviet people—they wanted to deprive them of all they had achieved in the years of Soviet power, to bring back the landlords and capitalists, seize the country's wealth and destroy the national

cultures of the Russian and other peoples of the fraternal republics of the U.S.S.R.

In this great war for liberty the Soviet farmers made a patriotic war effort equal to that of the working class. Although the enemy occupied huge areas of tillage at the very beginning of the war, supplies for the army at the front were maintained; town and countryside not only sent the best of their sons to the front but toiled selflessly to ensure that they were fed, clothed and supplied with everything necessary. Wives took the places of their soldier husbands, sisters replaced brothers who had gone to the front. In those difficult days the collective farmers showed that they could manage their huge farms efficiently. The wives and sisters of the soldiers at the front carted fertilizers, prepared seed, repaired farm machinery and worked double—for themselves and for those defending their country with arms in hand. Thousands of ordinary peasant women became chairmen of collective farms and took charge of brigades of farm workers. Elderly people who had been living on pensions, adolescents, all did their utmost to help the front by their labour at home.

The collective farmers tried to make the best use of every patch of land, to sow and reap as much as possible, knowing that in wartime the harvest is as important as guns and shells. The working day was dictated by the situation—work as much as the country needs.

The communiqués issued during the war by the Soviet Information Bureau not only reported the successes of the armed forces and the partisans but also successes on the labour front, including the contribution made towards victory by the collective farmers. The trials of wartime showed that the Soviet people found unlimited strength in Soviet power and in the Communist Party, and the collective farms, in particular, showed the unlimited possibilities of the cooperative system. The war also showed the correctness of the Communist Party line that had made our country strong economically by building a powerful industry and mechanizing farming.

The German fascists did very extensive damage to the Soviet farms. They levelled 70,000 villages to the ground, they destroyed 98,000 collective farms, 1,875 state farms and 2,890 MTS's; they slaughtered or drove off 17 million head of cattle, 27 million sheep and goats and 20 million pigs which is approximately the livestock population of Great Britain, Holland and Belgium taken together.

In the post-war years, when the country had to repair the damage done, the great strength of the Soviet system and the unity of the Soviet people were seen at their best. Cities helped the countryside, republics helped the war-devastated regions to rebuild their farms and factories and improve the living conditions of the people. On the initiative of the Yaroslavl collective farmers, the farms in those republics and regions that had not suffered from the invaders made donations of cattle, seed, fodder, etc., to help the speedy rehabilitation of regions that had been occupied and ruined by the Germans. Only under socialist conditions, only by the help of the state and the entire Soviet people, was it possible for the war-devastated areas to heal their wounds so quickly.

In the formerly occupied regions of the R.S.F.S.R., in the course of three years, 712,000 collective-farm houses were repaired or newly built into which three million people were moved from dug-outs and bunkers. In the same period in Byelorussia, where the fascists destroyed all the collective-farm buildings, 1,500,000 collective farmers were provided with new houses. During the five years immediately following the war the budget allocations for agriculture amounted to 116,400 million rubles. Thus, in an extremely short time, the Soviet people, solid around their Communist Party, healed the wounds inflicted by the war.

In the post-war years the Soviet collective-farm system has become the biggest mechanized agricultural system in the world; the output of grain, cotton, sugar-beet, meat, milk and other farm produce has not only been brought up to the pre-war level but very greatly increased. Social-

ist farming has shown how greatly superior it is to small, peasant farming; it has shown that it can provide food for the population and raw materials for industry on a constantly increasing scale.

In March 1956 Kirill Petrovich Orlovsky, one of the speakers at the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. and chairman of the Rassvet Collective Farm in Byelorussia, told the congress of the new Byelorussian villages that have arisen from the ashes of World War II. The Rassvet Collective Farm, said Orlovsky, has 1,200 member-families who till 22,250 acres; high incomes are obtained from grain, animal husbandry, vegetables and fruit. The collective farmers set about the cultivation of maize enthusiastically and by 1955 the area under this crop had been increased to 1,250 acres from which they obtained an average of 35 tons of green silage to the acre, some sections of the field giving as much as 50 tons to the acre. For ten years in succession the farm has obtained a high yield of potatoes over a big area. The farm received over a million rubles in 1955 for potatoes sold to the state and on the open market. Another 7,500,000 was obtained for flax; the total annual cash income is over 16,000,000 rubles.

Such high incomes enable the farms to pay out large sums in cash and kind to their members. The congress applauded when Orlovsky announced that in 1955 for each workday the farmers had received 3 kg. grain, 10 kg. potatoes, 1 kg. other vegetables, 1.5 kg. fodder, 30 gr. vegetable oil and sugar and 30 rubles in cash.

Its high cash income enables the Rassvet Collective Farm to make annual investments in building and in mechanizing and electrifying laborious processes in all departments. In 1956 the members decided to use part of the farm's income to build houses, a library, an automatic telephone exchange, a bakery, a bath-house and a dining-room, to lay on water and asphalt the streets. At their own expense and with the help of the farm, the collective farmers are building themselves excellent houses.

In 1956 the collective farm showed greatly improved

economic indices: the grain harvest was 500 tons and the potato harvest 2,900 tons better than in 1955, the average milk yield per cow improved by over 220 gallons and the cash income for the year increased from 16 million to 18 million rubles.

Not all collective farms, however, have been able to make the most of the possibilities inherent in the system. In many districts harvests have been poor, cattle-breeding has been neglected and the rules of scientific farming and animal husbandry have not been followed. The Communist Party has publicly exposed the big defects that have been discovered in the agricultural field and has laid down a clear and consistent programme for their rectification.

For the Communist Party the chief law is solicitude for the well-being of the people and its ceaseless organizational activity is directed towards the creation of abundance in our country. The Party, therefore, lays great emphasis on progress in agriculture. Measures for improvement in this field were discussed at the Plenary sessions of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. in September 1952, February and March 1954 and January 1955. The September Session pointed out that the level of production on the farms did not cover the growing requirements of the population for food products or the requirements of the light and food industries for raw material; output had not reached the level possible with the amount of machinery available and with the opportunities afforded by the collective-farm system. It was pointed out that there were many backward collective farms and even whole districts producing well below the average harvest. There was an obvious discrepancy between the rapid growth of industry, the consequent increase in the urban population and improved living standards of the working people on the one hand and the level of farm output on the other.

The Communist Party outlined a programme to ensure an abundance of food supplies for the whole population and at the same time provide higher living standards for the mass of the collective farmers.

Since animal husbandry and other branches depend on the level of grain production the Communist Party regards the increase of the total grain harvest as being of primary importance. Party plans also provide for an increase in the livestock population and for greater productivity; on many collective farms this important branch has not been producing enough marketable produce in the past and, consequently, did not yield a high enough income for the farm.

As can be seen from the generous allocations made annually from the state budget to finance collective and state farms and MTS's, the entire Soviet people are interested in increasing the output of all farm produce. In the 1954-56 period these allocations amounted to about 150,000 million rubles, 41,000 million more than in the preceding three years. The 1957 budget allots 61,600 million rubles for the promotion of agriculture and in addition to this the collective farms themselves invest part of their income in their basic funds and for building purposes, the total amount estimated for 1957 being approximately 26,000 million rubles: this year they will receive credits to a sum of 4,900 million rubles from the Land Bank. State funds contribute towards building and help provide additional machinery for all agricultural institutions; big investments have been made in the new virgin lands.

Since machinery is all important in socialist farming the MTS's come in for special attention. Before the war they were equipped mainly with wheeled tractors but today they have thousands of powerful caterpillar tractors in addition. New types of tractors for ploughing and new machines for the harvesting of potatoes, vegetables, cotton, sugar-beet and other crops have been developed and delivered to the MTS.

The Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. held in February-March 1954 discussed the problem of raising the grain harvest by opening up 32.1 million acres of virgin and old fallow lands within the next two or three years. Although this was regarded as the maximum that could be undertaken for a start, in

the spring of that same year of 1954 the people learned with great satisfaction that the plan for 32.1 million acres had already been exceeded by 50 per cent. Another year passed and the total area of new lands brought under the plough in Siberia, Kazakhstan, the Urals and the Volga area was increased to 74.1 million acres! Just to get an idea of this area we can mention that Denmark, Portugal, Belgium, Holland and Greece could all be placed inside it. During the past few years hundreds of new state farms and MTS's have been built in the bare steppelands.

The term "virgin land" has become popular throughout the country for everybody knows that these new lands provide us with millions of tons of extra grain every year. Its popularity is also due to the fact that thousands of young volunteers went there from all parts of the country — whole tractor brigades, schools of mechanized farming, agronomists and builders; 350,000 young men and women settled on the virgin lands in the course of two years. They went away to new work with the blessings not only of their parents but of the entire personnel of factories and machine and tractor stations.

The new settlers were not only tractor-drivers and mechanics well acquainted with farm life but also turners, textile workers, book-keepers, people of all walks of life but all of them strong in spirit and inspired by a great idea. The Young Communist League received 500,000 applications from its members who wished to help bring the steppes under the plough.

In the course of two years the state sent 200,000 tractors (reckoned in 15 h.p. units) and tens of thousands of other machines to the new farms. The best collective and state farms got huge grain harvests from the new lands — in Siberia the average was 19-21 bushels of spring-sown wheat to the acre while the best farms got from 28 to 35.5 bushels. The cultivation of virgin lands proved the true road to increased incomes for the collective farms and higher standards for the farmers.

When the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. opened in February 1956 the area of new lands brought under the

plough had reached 81,500,000 acres and millions of tons of grain filled the granaries of the farms and the state.

Never, in any other country, has such an area of virgin soil been brought under cultivation in such a short period, for only the socialist state, with its gigantic industry, could undertake such a task. The report made by the Central Committee of the Communist Party to the 20th Congress said that as a result of the selfless work of collective farmers, MTS and state-farm workers and thanks to the active help of the working class, the task of raising the virgin lands had been adequately fulfilled. By the autumn of 1956 the area of virgin land broken to the plough had reached 86,685,000 acres which is more than one and a half times the entire area under grain crops in Great Britain, Italy and France taken together. In the spring of 1957 a further increase brought the figure up to almost 89,000,000 acres.

During the past few years the Communist Party and the Soviet Government have adopted a number of measures to develop socialist farming, give the collective farmers greater material interest in increasing the output of food products, and at the same time develop their initiative. These are: a decree on the Rules of the Agricultural Cooperative and the further development of the initiative of collective farmers in organizing farm production and management, a decree on monthly advances to collective farmers and on extra pay for work done, a decree increasing the prices paid for obligatory deliveries and for produce sold to the state over and above them, a decree on a new system of planning for collective and state farms and a decree abolishing obligatory deliveries to the state from the household plots of collective farmers and urban factory and office workers.

More than twenty years have passed since the Rules of the Agricultural Cooperative were adopted by the Second Congress of Collective-Farm Shock Workers summing up the experience that had been acquired by that time. The Rules played an important part in strengthening the collective farms. In the years that have elapsed the

collective farms have changed the lives of millions of peasants, have opened up new horizons, have brought within their reach new techniques and modern science. The Rules adopted many years ago no longer covered the many sides of collective-farm life and, in some cases, limited the initiative of the farmers.

The Communist Party, therefore, listening attentively to the proposals of the farmers, found it necessary to recommend to the collective farmers that they make the necessary amendments and addenda to their Rules, each in accordance with local conditions and having in view the major task of improving animal husbandry. One of the points in the new Rules says that collective farmers may now decide for themselves the area of the household plot permitted to each family and also the question of cattle maintained for the personal use of the collective farmers. The general meeting of a collective farm also has the right to set a minimum number of workdays for each member of the farm.

The Rules of the Agricultural Cooperative, with all the amendments and addenda, must be approved by the general meeting and registered at the executive committee of the local Soviet after which it is the basic law governing all farm-work and every collective farmer is duty-bound to observe it.

The material interest of the farmers facilitates the development of the collective farms and ensures a rapid increase in output. Formerly the farm's income in cash and kind was distributed at the end of each year in a lump sum according to the number of workdays put in, but this proved an insufficient stimulant for the farmers. The more progressive farms showed that a system of monthly advances was better. The Party and the Government recommended collective farms to pay advances throughout the year, with the permission of the general meeting, of course, the sum involved to be no less than 25 per cent of cash income from all branches and 50 per cent of funds received in the form of advances on contracts, from sales to the state and for obligatory deliveries.

Another way of making the farmer more interested in the harvest is that of extra pay for harvests that exceed the plan. The general meeting of the farmers may now fix extra payment to individual farmers, brigades and teams, tractor brigades, MTS's, specialists and the management for harvests of all crops in excess of the planned amount and for higher productivity on the cattle farms. In determining the extra payment the level attained by the brigade or team in its own sphere—field work, dairy farming or any other branch—is taken into consideration.

The new system of advances and extra payment has greatly increased the interest which the farmers take in the final result of their work and has increased their efforts to raise the harvest yield and the productivity of the cattle.

The Bolshevik Collective Farm, Shostka District, Sumy Region, pays an advance to its farmers in accordance with the number of workdays at the end of each month. Every family gets from 600 to 1,000 rubles a month. A good example is the family of Ivan Denisovich Sherstyuk which consists of three able-bodied people and receives from 1,000 to 1,500 rubles advance a month in cash.

The Bolshevik Farm was one of the more backward in past years but is now catching up with the best. Its grain harvest has been increased and the area under early vegetables has been extended. The farmers have organized the fattening of pigs for the market. The farm's income for 1956 was nearly seven million rubles.

The spirit of creation is the motive force of any social undertaking. So it is with a collective farm. The more the initiative and resourcefulness displayed by the farmers, the better the results of their work. For ths reason the Communist Party makes every effort to give the initiative of the rural population full play. One way in which this has been done is to be seen in the decision of the Party and the Soviet Government to improve farm planning. Formerly collective farms were given plans to fulfil that stated exactly what crops had to be planted, on what lands, what animals and in what numbers the farm

had to maintain. The result of this was that the people got used to having a plan given to them from above and showed very little initiative themselves. For example, the southern regions of the country, especially the Ukraine, were ordered by the higher authorities to sow spring wheat although this crop produces poor harvests in the south while the farms of Siberia, Urals and Kazakhstan were ordered to plant winter wheat which gives equally small harvests in those districts. Maize was planned only for the collective farms in the south although some of the more progressive farms had shown that maize could be grown as a fodder crop all over the country.

Today planning begins in the collective farms where the plans are drawn up in consultation with the MTS's. The final results of the farm year are no longer judged by the area sown or the number of cattle in the herd but by the total harvest of grain, potatoes and other vegetables and the total productivity of the herds. The new system of planning makes for a better distribution of crops, it aims at getting the maximum from each acre of land and enables collective farmers to use their initiative and enterprise.

Many collective farms now decide for themselves what crops they will plant on what lands and which breeds of cattle do best in their locality. The plan, drawn up by the farm management and the MTS, is discussed at the general meeting and then becomes law for the farm concerned.

Under the new planning system hundreds of collective farms have re-examined crop distribution on their lands and have launched out boldly with the cultivation of maize, bringing great benefits to the cooperative.

The constant increase in the amount of produce delivered to state warehouses by state and collective farms made it possible for the government to reduce in 1953 obligatory deliveries from household plots worked by collective farmers and urban workers in their spare time. Thus was the way prepared for the abolition of obligatory deliveries from such household plots from 1st January, 1958.

The 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U., held in February 1956, summed up the results of the work of the Party and the people for the period following the 19th Congress and laid down a programme for the building of communist society in the U.S.S.R. and a programme of struggle for peace throughout the world. The congress approved the draft of the Sixth Five-Year Plan for the Development of Industry and Agriculture; although special emphasis is still laid on the development of the heavy industries ample provision is made for the rapid development of the production of consumers' goods, including more varied and better food supplies.

The congress approved the measures already put into effect to raise the level of farm production and instructed the Central Committee of the Party to continue working in this direction. It was laid down at the congress that the grain harvest must be raised to 176 million tons by 1960 by means of increasing the harvest yield of all crops per acre, by continuing the cultivation of virgin and fallow lands, by increasing the acreage under maize, by speeding up the harvesting of grain crops and by reducing losses during the harvest period.

The spirit of the 20th Congress proved a wonderful inspiration to the Soviet working class, collective farmers and intellectuals. The plan for 1956 and the first six months of 1957 was fulfilled by all branches of industry, especially brilliant results being recorded by such decisive branches as the coal, oil, iron and steel, chemical and engineering industries, and in power supplies.

Special mention must be made of the engineering industry which produced over a thousand new types of machines in 1956 alone.

The gross industrial output for 1957 will be more than 33 times that of pre-revolutionary Russia and almost four times that of 1940, the last pre-war year. Soviet farms, therefore, are now being provided with more machinery than ever before—1,500,000 tractors, about 380,000 harvester combines and millions of other machines are now working in the fields of the Soviet Union.

The following is a list of the more important farm machines produced in the first six months of 1957:

Tractors (in 15 h.p. units)	130,000
Motor lorries	67,000
Grain harvester combines	56,000
Pick-up attachments to harvester combines for selected harvesting	112,000
Chassis for harvesters of the windrower type (for MTS and state-farm use)	74,000
Headers for ditto	75,000
Maize harvester combines	17,000
Silo harvester combines	24,000
Beet harvester combines	4,500
Tractor ploughs	63,000
Tractor seeders	138,000
Potato planters (for square-pocket planting)	3,800
Tractor cultivators	116,000
Tractor grass-mowers	18,000

In the U.S.S.R. industry and agriculture constitute a single national economy, industrial workers and collective farmers working hand in hand to fulfil the plans of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government. Factory workers regard the task of raising the level of agriculture set by the Communist Party as being very much their concern and the collective farmers, in their turn, are making every effort to supply more raw materials for industry and better food supplies for the towns. As members of one family they do different work but they live one life, help each other in every way.

The constantly increasing numbers of machines provided for the farms is the result of the work of miners, iron founders, engineers, oil-drillers and light industry workers whose efforts serve to strengthen the bonds between worker and peasant. Workers in the chemical industry have also made an important contribution: during the past five years they have almost doubled their output of mineral fertilizers, producing about 11,000,000 tons in 1956 and 5,700,000 tons in the first half of 1957.

Industrial workers and engineers have equipped the huge MTS's that now service the farms and have done much to promote electrification in the countryside. The basic and most laborious work on the farms is being more and

more mechanized with each passing year; the 1956 figures show that 97 per cent of autumn ploughing and 99 per cent of spring ploughing was done by tractors, 99 per cent of the cotton crop and 97 per cent of the beet crop were gathered by machines and 83 per cent of the grain crop by harvester combines.

Year by year the collective farms grow economically sounder. The advantages accruing from the big cooperative undertakings enable them to place greater sums of money in their basic funds and so erect new farm buildings, houses, clubs and so on and acquire thoroughbred cattle. The collective farms have been able to invest large sums of money in the mechanization of the more laborious tasks on the dairy farms, in building cableways, water-supply systems, and power stations and electrifying much of the farm work (electric milkers, for example).

The following table gives some of the economic indices for the past four years, those of 1940 being given by way of comparison.

	1940	*1953*	*1954*	*1955*	*1956*
Basic funds at the end of the year (thousand million rubles)	27.7	69.8	78.1	87.6	98.9
Cash income of collective farms (thousand million rubles)*	20.7	49.6	63.3	75.6	94.5
Sown area (million acres) .	290.7	326.0	343.0	366.2	375.6
Cattle** (million heads) . .	20.1	31.4	31.9	30.7	31.3
Sheep	39.1	83.3	81.2	82.4	84.0
Pigs	8.2	21.5	22.7	23.2	26.0

* These figures do not include the farm produce paid out in kind to the collective farmers in accordance with workdays done or that used by the farm for its own needs: the cost of this produce greatly exceeds the cash income of the farm.

** The figures for 1953-56 are those of the cattle census taken on 1st October each year.

The total cash income of the collective farms increased by 120 per cent during the Fifth Five-Year Plan period, which enabled them to pay out larger sums in cash to the farmers. Another important step forward was made in 1956 when the total cash income of the farms was approximately 20 per cent more than in 1955. The sum paid out to collective farmers during the first six months of 1957 exceeded the amount paid out in the same period of 1956. These improvements in collective-farm living stan dards are felt by every peasant family.

The family of the Moldavian collective farmer, Ivan Kirillovich Shvets, consists of four adults all working on the Lenin Collective Farm. In 1956 their cash income was double that of 1955—26,000 rubles in addiotion to wheat, maize, fruit and grapes. The Moldavian peasant who, before the Revolution, fed his lamily on hominy and wore homespun clothes, has now become af fluent.

Take as another example the family of A. Yenenkov of the Komintern Collective Farm, Tambov Region: the four able-bodied adults of the family in 1956 recorded 2,708 workdays earning 5,416 kg. of grain, about 2,700 kg. of milk, 2,166 kg. of vegetables, 55 kg. of meat and 13,540 rubles in cash.

Before the coming of Soviet power landless peasants in the Baltic states wandered far and wide in search of work and happiness. In our time the collective farmers of these republics are draining marshlands and annually increasing the sown area and harvest yields. This, again, affects the life of every collective farmer's family.

The family of Karolis Kuzaitis of the Chernyakhovsky Collective Farm in Lithuania consists of five able-bodied workers who last year worked a total of 3,800 workdays and received 26,000 rubles in cash, almost 11.5 tons of grain, 380 kg. of sugar and other farm produce.

As a result the purchasing power of the rural population is steadily increasing. The peasants of the Smolensk, Chuvash, Udmurt and Mordovian villages who, before the Revolution, wore homespun clothes and bast shoes now

buy woollen and silk fabrics, fashionable shoes, wireless sets, gramophones, motor cycles and factory-made furniture.

The Central Statistical Board systematically investigated the budgets of thousands of families of workers, engineers and technicians, clerks and collective farmers. The investigation of the budgets of 25,900 families of collective farmers showed that in 1956 the consumption by one member of a collective-farm family (average for the U.S.S.R.) exceeded the figure for 1940: eggs by 110 per cent, meat and fats by 63 per cent, milk and milk products by 48 per cent and sugar 338 per cent.

From these figures we see that there has been a great improvement in collective-farm housewife's budget. These are figures that everybody finds pleasing.

We asked the Saratov Regional Consumers' Cooperative to inform us of what had been sold in the village cooperatives during the past year together with separate figures for Novouzensk District; we were interested to know what was being bought in a district where the peasants were dying of hunger before the Revolution (see chapter "Pages from the Bitter Past," p. 19).

They gave us the following figures for goods sold which require no explanation.

	All village cooperative shops in Saratov Region	Shops in Novouzensk District
Ready-made clothes and underwear	122,666,000 rubles	30,353,000 rubles
Leather footwear	44,654,000 "	8,630,000 "
Cotton fabrics	88,628,000 "	23,399,000 "
Silk fabrics	47,850,000 "	13,187,000 "
Woollen fabrics	17,818,000 "	3,766,000 "
Sewing-machines	11,280 units	2,551 units
Bicycles	17,640 "	2,785 "
Motor cycles	1,841 "	294 "
Wireless sets	12,450 "	1,768 "

The growth of consumption and demand for consumers' goods shows better than anything else the improvement

in the material well-being of the collective farmer. In 1957 Soviet trading organizations allotted 1,188,000 sewing-machines for sale in the countryside. In 1956 the rural population purchased 1,289,000 wireless sets, hundreds of thousands of gramophones, cameras, bicycles and motor cycles and tens of thousands of motor cars.

In the course of five years the trade turnover of the consumers' cooperatives that carry all village trade increased by 110 per cent. In 1956 there was a further increase of 11 per cent over the 1955 figure.

Collective farms and collective farmers, for produce delivered and sold to the state in 1955, received 31,000 million rubles more than in 1950. The year 1956 alone saw an increase of 20,000 million rubles as compared with the increase achieved in 1955. Every year a higher level is reached.

Further evidence of improved living standards is the growth in the number of deposits in village savings-banks and the increase in the sums deposited. At the end of 1950 there were 3,877,000 village savings-bank accounts and by the end of 1956 the number had increased to 9,878,000; the total sums deposited were 2,059 million and 11,593 million rubles respectively.

The Sixth Five-Year Plan envisages an average increase of 40 per cent in collective-farm incomes, a plan that is already being fulfilled.

The year 1956 proved an exceptional one in the history of Soviet agriculture. All through the autumn the press carried reports from republics and regions on the fulfilment of plans for the delivery of grain, meat, milk and wool to the state warehouses. These simple figures were very gratifying to the Soviet people as they gave them a picture of what had been achieved by the rural population and showed how the material well-being of the collective farmers had reached a new, high level.

All over the tremendous territories where virgin land had but shortly before been broken the harvests gathered exceeded anything before known—from 22.5 to 34 bushels per acre. In former years it was considered an achieve-

ment if the grain delivered to the state amounted to 35.2 million tons, but in 1956 collective and state farms poured 52.8 million tons into the state granaries.

Progress has also been made in cattle-breeding. The total milk yield for the entire Soviet Union increased by 35 per cent and the amount delivered and sold to the state was almost doubled. Collective farms have begun to produce more potatoes and other vegetables and more industrial crops.

The socialist competition in honour of the Fortieth Anniversary of the October Revolution is working wonders throughout the countryside. The plan for milk deliveries for the first half of 1957 was fulfilled by 108 per cent by June 20; 1,726,000 tons of milk more than in the corresponding period of last year have been delivered or sold to the state. This is an achievement of which the whole country is proud for everybody is interested in progress made in the field of agriculture.

The country has adequately rewarded the achievements of the farmers of the newly opened regions. The Kazakh S.S.R., Altai and Krasnoyarsk territories, Omsk, Novosibirsk, Chelyabinsk, Chkalov and Saratov regions have each been awarded the Order of Lenin and over 90,000 collective farmers, tractor and combine drivers and other workers on the virgin lands have been granted high government awards. The older generation is proud of the youth that has achieved so much on the lands newly opened up; the Lenin Young Communist League (Komsomol) has been awarded its fifth Order, the Order of Lenin for its work in this field.

Under the old Russian autocracy the Russian workers and peasants were oppressed but the population of the non-Russian regions suffered under a double yoke, that of Russian tsarism and that of their "own" feudal lords. The regions inhabited by the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Tajiks, Turkmenians, Kirghiz and other non-Russian nationalities had no big industrial enterprises, irrigation canals were few and far between, water was in the hands of the feudal landowners, cotton crops were small and the cattle herdsmen led a nomad life.

The Great October Socialist Revolution liberated the Central Asian peasants, gave them land and water and brought culture to their distant villages and hamlets. In the fraternal family of Soviet peoples, the working people of Central Asia and other outlying districts of the former Russian Empire have made great progress in political, economic and cultural life. In Uzbekistan, for example, a highly developed industry has been built up, the irrigated area has been increased by 1,976,000 acres, 50,000 tractors now cultivate the fields and harvest yields have been raised beyond all recognition. In 1956 Uzbek cotton-growers produced 2,500,000 tons of raw cotton and have promised to deliver 3,000,000 tons of raw cotton, almost six times the output of 1913, to the state warehouses in 1957.

For centuries the Uzbek people have dreamed of making the arid Hungry Steppe fertile and today their dream is coming true. The Soviet state has made big investments to open it up and hundreds of powerful excavators and other machines are working there. Collective farms and MTS's have already been organized and are reaping good harvests of cotton. Within the next few years the Hungry Steppe will become a flourishing, fertile region producing thousands of tons of cotton annually.

Similar changes have taken place in all the fraternal republics of the U.S.S.R. Kazakhstan, for example, in addition to being an important industrial centre in the eastern part of the country is also one of the biggest wheat producers. In 1956 Kazakhstan provided the country with 16,000,000 tons of grain.

In the Central Asian Republics, Kazakhstan and the Transcaucasus huge irrigation works have been undertaken to give more tillage to the collective farms, mainly for industrial crops.

In Tajikistan the area of irrigated lands used for farming has increased by 15 per cent during the past five years. In Kirghizia the Orto-Tokoi Reservoir has been completed and headway has been made on the construction of the Great Chu Canal and the Otuz-Adyr Irrigation Scheme. The irrigated area has been increased by 98,800 acres.

In Turkmenia the Tejen Reservoir has begun to function, increasing the cultivated area and creating greater facilities for flooding the lands sown to cotton. In this republic the construction of the Kara-Kum Canal is well under way and considerable work has been completed on the summer pastures where about 3,000 wells and small reservoirs have been built.

Irrigation is also being extensively developed in the Moldavian S.S.R., the irrigated area having been increased by 58 per cent under the Fifth Five-Year Plan. In Byelorussia and the Baltic Republics, on the contrary, land improvement schemes have been launched to drain the marshlands; in Latvia alone 795,340 acres of swamp were drained during the Fifth Five-Year Plan.

Nowhere in the Soviet Union, however, are people content with what has been achieved: the Communist Party teaches our people not to rest on their laurels but to go continuously forward. In the great struggle to raise the living standard of the population launched by the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U., the Communist Party appeals to all state and collective farms to increase annually the amount of meat, milk and butter produced per 100 hectares (250 acres) of farmland.

Zonal conferences of farm workers held in the spring and early summer of 1957 bore witness to the enthusiasm with which the men and women of the collective farms are undertaking to raise the level of animal husbandry on their farms and increase the output of meat per 250 acres of land.

Yelena Andreyeva, an agronomist, is chairwoman of the Komintern Collective Farm in Michurinsk District, Tambov Region. This was a farm that lagged a long way behind others in the district, its harvests of grain and potatoes were low and its dairy farm was run at a loss. It is only two years since Yelena Andreyeva took over but with the help of the Communists on the farm and the support of the whole membership the Komintern Farm now ranks amongst the best.

Leading members of the collective farms of Voronezh Region who listened to Andreyeva's speech at the zonal

conference were interested in the figures she quoted. In 1955 the farm planted 296 acres to maize which provided such quantities of excellent feed for pigs and cattle that it enabled the farm to produce 2.65 tons of pork and 4,713 gallons of milk from every 100 hectares, the milk yield per cow being 688 gallons. In 1956 the farm increased the area under maize and reaped over 20 tons of silage from each acre; in that year the pork yield was 3 tons to every 100 hectares and the milk yield per cow was also slightly increased.

"Our farm has a five-year plan for increasing production," Andreyeva told the conference, "but last year's results show that the 1960 target can be reached this year. By 1960 our collective farmers expect to gather 35 bushels of grain or 28 tons of maize silage or over 3 tons of maize cobs from every acre."

Here she was interrupted by a burst of applause and then continued to quote her figures:

"By 1960 we shall produce 17 tons of meat, of which 15 tons will be pork and our milk output will be 8,810 gallons to every 100 hectares."

Andreyeva then told the conference in detail how the collective farmers proposed to fulfil these difficult obligations.

Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchov also spoke at this conference. "Comrade Andreyeva's speech," he said, "is a sign of the times. There was a time when Maria Demchenko was the first collective farmer in our country to undertake to produce twenty tons of sugar-beet to the acre. Many people were literally flabbergasted at her daring. After that not only Maria Demchenko but hundreds of other collective farmers undertook to get from 24 to 28 tons from each acre and got them. In my opinion Comrade Andreyeva's bold initiative may be placed on the same level as the initiative of Maria Demchenko and her followers. Comrade Andreyeva's initiative must be given every support."

Andreyeva's village in Tambov Region is hundreds of miles from the collective farms of the Ukraine and Byelorussia, but news travels fast and the initiative of the

Komintern Collective Farm soon became widely known and many collective farms, even whole districts, have solemnly undertaken to treble and quadruple their output of meat in one, two, or, at the most, three years.

At a conference of farm workers from the regions and autonomous republics of the north-western part of the R.S.F.S.R. Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchov said the following: "The successes already recorded in agriculture and the excellent prospects for further development permit us to pose and solve a problem of the greatest importance to the state—to overtake the United States of America, within the next few years, in the output of meat, milk and butter per head of the population."

The heroic people of the Soviet Union have overcome many great difficulties in the struggle to build a socialist society. In the hard years of the Civil War, when there was a dire shortage of food and clothing, when the country was encircled by foreign armies, the workers and peasants defended the gains of the October Revolution. They stood up to all the trials and vicissitudes of World War II. Now that the Soviet Union has become a great industrial power, now that the collective farms have grown strong, we can enter into competition with America and in a few years surpass her output of meat, milk and butter per head of the population.

It will be remembered that the U.S.A. developed her economy under conditions of peace, but, in spite of that, it took the Americans nearly two hundred years to reach their present level. In the forty years of Soviet power the U.S.S.R. has achieved rates of development in industry and agriculture that the U.S.A. cannot even dream of.

How high is the hurdle we have to jump to catch up with the U.S.A. in this field? Meat production must be increased by 250 per cent, milk and butter by 60 per cent. Here are a few figures showing the production of these items per head of the population:

	U.S.S.R.	U.S.A.
Meat	32.3 kg.	102.3 kg.
Milk	245 "	343 "
Butter	2.8 "	3.8 "

For every 100 hectares (250 acres) of farm lands the following amounts were produced in 1956.

	U.S.S.R.	U.S.A.
Meat	1.33 tons	3.3 tons
Milk	2,224 gallons	2,445 gallons

It has been proved that our collective and state farms are in a position to leap the barrier that divides us from the U.S.A. in the production of meat, milk and butter. To do so we must produce the following for every 100 hectares of farm land:

Meat 4.2 tons (6.7 tons live weight)
Milk 3,105 gallons

The patriotic movement to achieve this end has spread over the whole country. The numerous obligations undertaken by collective- and state-farm workers and published in the Soviet press show what great possibilities we have: the thing now is to make the best use of them. At the end of some four, at most five years, the U.S.S.R. will produce 20-21 million tons of meat annually which means that the task set by the Communist Party in competition with the U.S.A. will have been solved. As far as the per capita production of milk is concerned, that problem can be solved by 1958.

The rate of development of dairy farming in our collective and state farms is higher than ever before known. It took the U.S.A. ten years to raise the average milk yield per cow from 330 gallons to 440 gallons. The same has been achieved by the collective and state farms of Moscow, Voronezh and Ryazan regions and by the Ukrainian Republic in one year. In 1957, the Soviet output of butter will be as much as or greater than that of the U.S.A. but as the population of the U.S.S.R. is greater the amount per capita will naturally be lower. It will require a tremendous effort on the part of the collective farmers to bring the per capita production of meat, milk and butter up to that of the U.S.A., but they have shown that they are capable of this effort.

NEW PEOPLE IN A NEW VILLAGE

Under Soviet power the working people of our country have become the real masters of the land, masters of their own fate and have proved able to take advantage of those forces that have lain dormant in them for centuries. In every walk of life people have found ways of applying their initiative, everywhere the way is open to those with new and daring ideas. There is nothing in the world akin to the feeling of pride in one's work, in the community in which one works, in a job done well for one's country.

In the Soviet years great changes have taken place in even the most distant corners of the country. The villages have not only changed in outward appearance but there have been radical changes in economy and culture, in the peasant's way of life, brought about by such newcomers to the countryside as machinery for field and dairy farming, electric light and water mains, agronomists and zootechnicians, schools, libraries, hospitals and radio.

There is always some field in which the collective farmer can make good use of his knowledge and ability, for he is not alone, his present life and his future are bound up with the farm community. Before the Revolution the peasant was a small property owner whose fields were hedged off from those of his neighbour, his interests were narrow and he was in constant fear that some trouble may come to him from the district or regional authorities, from the kulaks or landowners, from local civil servants and the

police. The peasant was helpless in the face of natural calamities, he was in the grip of darkness and superstition.

There is an old Russian saying: "Mine is the end house, I don't care what goes on further down," which shows the attitude of the people of the old village, every man hoped to be able to hide behind his own fence and so protect himself from the countless misfortunes that might come his way. The life of the collective farmer today is bound up with the community in which he lives, he is a man of progressive ideas who takes an interest in everything.

The collective-farm system has brought a large number of simple peasants into nation-wide prominence and the successes of socialist farming are closely associated with their names.

Mikhail Yefremov, a collective-farm brigadier in Beloglazovo District, Altai Territory, was one of those who initiated the movement to get bigger grain harvests from large fields. In 1935 he began his experiments on a 30-acre field and was the first to suggest denser sowing of spring wheat in Siberia. Yefremov's experiments did much to develop wheat growing in the Altai and other Siberian regions, such fabulous harvests as 56-68 bushels per acre having been gathered. Yefremov now has thousands of followers and pupils who study his methods.

Praskovya Angelina was the organizer of the first women's tractor brigade in the country, a brigade that broke all records for tractor work at the Staro-Beshevka MTS in the Ukraine. Angelina's father was a former farm-labourer who, together with his family, joined a collective farm in 1928. His daughter attended courses for tractor-drivers and in her first year at work headed a brigade of women tractor-drivers. In answer to her appeal 100,000 farm girls went to learn tractor-driving. Angelina's brigade became a sort of school where mechanics were trained under the guidance of their brigadier. She brought much that was new and valuable into the work of the MTS, made radical improvements in exploitation methods that gave the machines greater produc-

tivity and helped the collective farmers get better harvests. Angelina is now a Hero of Socialist Labour.

The name of Maria Demchenko is associated with the "five-hundreder" movement, a movement to get five hundred centners of sugar-beet from every hectare (20 tons to the acre). Demchenko was a team-leader at the Komintern Collective Farm, Petrovskoye District, Kiev Region; today she is an agronomist. She not only got high yields from her own fields but organized a nation-wide competition to get bigger sugar-beet harvests.

Darya Garmash, a tractor-driver, became director of an MTS, Praskovya Kavardak, another tractor-driver from the Kuban, became an agronomist, Konstantin Borin, a combine-operator, is now Candidate of Agricultural Sciences.... This list could be continued indefinitely for these are the names of those who grew up together with the collective farms and MTS's and who first discovered new ways of getting more out of the soil.

In the winter of 1956 we visited the village of Koltsovka in the Chuvash Autonomous Republic.

There was a strange assortment of vehicles outside the offices of the farm management when we arrived. They all belonged to excursionists enjoying the hospitality of the farm; the people had come here to learn the secrets of maize cultivation and the farm's plans for the spring planting together with all the technicalities.

The chairman of the farm, Sergei Korotkov, showed his visitors round the farm and adjoining village: they saw the cattle stalls and the silo towers, the power station, workshops, garage, wireless installation, printing-shop where the farm's own newspaper is printed, the medical centre with X-ray and physio-therapy installations, the drugstore, maternity hospital, crèche, club and secondary school.

Before the Revolution the cold podzol soil of Chuvashia gave the peasants scanty harvests but today's collective farmers get harvests of 24 to 36 bushels of grain from huge areas of that same soil.

The soil has become different since it has been tilled collectively by a whole community armed with knowledge,

machinery and experience. As on all collective farms the fields at Koltsovka are tilled by tractors, reaped by harvester combines and hundreds of tons of mineral fertilizers and manure are fed to them every year. Forest belts shelter the fields from hot dry winds.

There is one important thing about the Koltsovka collective farmers that has been developed as a result of communal life: they are always looking for ways to increase harvest yields and improve stock-breeding. They were, for example, the first people to grow maize in Chuvashia. Although in 1954 some people doubted whether maize would grow in those parts they soon had proof that it would: from a field of 85 acres the collective farmers got 32 tons of green silage from every acre. The farm's cows and pigs had fresh silage all winter and spring which gave the farm a better milk yield and fatter pigs.

By 1956 the farm already planted about 500 acres to maize and got over 33.7 tons of silage from each of them. The chairman of the farm, Sergei Ksenofontovich Korotkov, is an enterprising man with a stubborn character—the planned goal always had to be reached. Like his fellow-farmers he was constantly thinking of new ways of getting a bigger income from the land, the animals and the machines.

Like most other collective farms, the Lenin Farm in Koltsovka has begun reckoning its output of all produce at so much per acre. In 1956 they got over 5,000 gallons of milk and 4.1 tons of meat from every 100 hectares (about 250 acres). The chairman has since announced that the farmers will undertake to raise the figures to 8,800 gallons of milk and 15 tons of meat by 1960. In order to fulfil such an undertaking the collective farmers must this year (1957) get 40 tons of corn-cobs and green silage from every acre under maize.

The Koltsovka collective farm is making giant strides ahead; already it is producing more than twice as much milk and one and a half times as much meat per 100 hectares as a similar area of farmland in America.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party instructed Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchov to send a letter

to the chairman of the farm, Sergei Ksenofontovich Korotkov, and to the secretary of the farm's Communist Party organization, Alexander Fyodorovich Domanin, welcoming the patriotic initiative of the Koltsovka farmers.

"The indices are very good," said the letter, "and your experience shows what great possibilities there are of increasing the output of milk and meat in the Chuvash A.S.S.R. and in the neighbouring republics and regions."

Who are the people on whom the Communist Party relies? Sergei Korotkov, who has been chairman of the farm for a quarter of a century, was formerly a farm-labourer. Today he is a Hero of Socialist Labour and a Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. Some of his fellow-villagers have also become famous—Prokopy Pupin, Alexander Domanin, Valentina Popkova, Alexander Ashanin are all Heroes of Socialist Labour whose abilities and talents have been brought out by labour on the communal lands liberated from the landowner and the kulak.

* * *

"Let us now take a look at the village."

These words come from a guide at the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow as he invites visitors to examine a group of buildings erected in the shade of avenues of green trees.

Much of what is to be seen in the country's best collective farms is to be found in this model village at the exhibition.

The first building the visitors reach bears the signboard "Collective-Farm Administration."

"May I see the chairman?" asks one of the visitors jokingly.

But the guide says, "No, everybody's in the fields."

And, indeed, there are few visitors to this "Collective-Farm Administration" during the day, most people want to see the experimental fields, orchards and dairy farms and the machinery in the nearby MTS; in the evening, however, there are many visitors to the "Collective-Farm

Administration" building, which this year "belongs" to the Memory of Lenin Farm in Cherkassy Region. The various branches of this farm have made especially great headway since the September Plenary Session of the Communist Party in 1953. The average grain harvest that year was 20 bushels to the acre but by 1956 it had been increased to 37 bushels to the acre. In those same two years the milk yield per cow was 359 and 660 gallons respectively.

During the past four years the collective farm has spent 3,350,000 rubles on building and has erected a power station, wind-motors, a cow-house, two barns to house calves, two pigsties, a feeding-yard for the pigs, a workshop for the preparation of feed, a granary, a garage and a club.

In 1956 the amount paid out for each workday (reduced to a cash equivalent) was 23 rubles.

Houses are being built according to a single architectural plan; several streets of handsome houses have appeared in the village during the past three years, the farm having helped its members build 240 dwelling houses.

Equally great changes are taking place in all the republics of the U.S.S.R. In a speech he made when awarding the Order of Lenin to the Turkmenian S.S.R. for achievements in agriculture, Anastas Ivanovich Mikoyan mentioned the Leninism Collective Farm in Mari Region: "It rarely happens that there is such a fine combination of name and content. That collective farm really is the embodiment of Leninism."

Mikoyan quoted some figures: the farm planted 1,730 acres to cotton of the long-staple variety and got 2,761 pounds of raw cotton from each acre. The farm's Brigade No. 5, which is headed by Yazmurad Orazsakhatov, obtained 3,652 pounds of raw cotton from each of its 200 acres. The farm's annual income, excluding the produce of its vegetable gardens, averages 12,000 rubles for each farmer.

The new life in the village is being built by millions of collective farmers, by people for whom the farm is home. Collective-farm history is full of examples of heroism displayed by those who have protected their farms against the inroads of both man and nature. Mutual aid in building up the collective farms and in times of trouble has become

the usual thing; farm helps farm, brigade helps brigade and region helps region. An example of this is the annual mass exodus of farmers from the south to Siberia and Kazakhstan to help get in the harvest where there is a shortage of people.

It has become traditional in the Central Asian republics for deputations of cotton-growers from regions engaged in competition to visit their rivals to learn from them and to exchange experiences with them.

The collective farmers' care and solicitude for the common cause is to be seen in everything, great and small. It is well known that the collective farmers are very exacting in their supervision of the work of tractor-drivers and harvester combine operators to ensure there should be no loss of grain. They regret every calf or piglet lost, every handful of grain spilled. These are occurrences that disturb the whole village and are discussed by the administration. The newspapers have reported many cases of collective farmers saving a cowshed or stable during a fire at the farm and ignoring their own houses.

There are moments in life when a man's will-power, his spirit and sense of duty are displayed in deeds that everybody can realize the beauty of. Hero of Socialist Labour, Prokopy Nektov, is known all over the country although he lives in a distant Orenburg village. He lost both legs at the front but mustered strength enough to take his place at the wheel of a harvester combine and work it so as to break records. In addition to that he has trained dozens of young collective farmers to handle a combine. Here is Nektov's own explanation of why he went back to work: "If there is anything that made me go back to work after being badly wounded, that impelled me to work a combine and achieve certain successes, it was nothing that is in me myself; it was our socialist system, our system of training people, it was our Soviet way of life."

The state emblem of the Soviet Union is a hammer and sickle on the globe in the rays of the sun and framed in a wreath of ears of corn. It symbolizes the power of the workers and peasants in the U.S.S.R. The October Social-

ist Revolution placed all political power in the hands of the working people and drew thousands of people into the management of the state. All power in the U.S.S.R. belongs to the working people of town and village through their Soviets of Working People's Deputies. Hundreds of thousands of peasants are members of the village Soviets. In the two chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. there are 220 peasant deputies who have their seats along with workers and leading scientists. Amongst them are Nikolai Lyskin, chairman of the Rossia Collective Farm, Stavropol Territory, a member of the Soviet of the Union Committee on Legislation, and Nikolai Puzanchikov, chairman of a Moscow Region collective farm who is a member of the Soviet of the Union Budget Committee. Many collective farmers have been elected to the higher state bodies of the U.S.S.R. for a number of years in succession. Alexandra Lyuskova, a pig-keeper from Vologda Region, and Fyodor Ivanovich Dubkovetsky, chairman of the Zdobutok Zhovtnya Farm, have been elected to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. three times running. At meetings of the Supreme Soviet Anastasia Zenkina, brigadier from the Lenin Collective Farm, Balashov Region, sits next to Ivan Vorobyov, engine-driver at Povoroni Station, while Alexei Byelov, chairman of the Krasny Putilovets Collective Farm, sits next to Maria Volkonskaya, a weaver from Kalinin.

People of all ages and from all walks of life have earned the confidence of the whole people. When the Supreme Soviet is in session in the Kremlin one may see 65-year-old Hamrakul Tursunkulov, thrice Hero of Socialist Labour, together with young collective-farm women—Verdiyeva from Azerbaijan, Zakirova from Bashkiria, Zamakeyeva from Kabardinia, Fardzinova from Ossetia, and the Circassian Abidokova.

The Soviet state is one of many nationalities, all of whom live together in friendship and concord, united in the common cause, the building of communism. In the higher legislative bodies deputies from all the fraternal republics take part in the settlement of all questions concerning the life of the country. Workers and peasants

stand at the helm of state, they guide the politics, economy, culture—the whole life of the country.

In the Foundations of Communism Collective Farm, Ryazan Region, there is an elderly woman by the name of Praskovya Nikolayevna Kovrova. Her story is that of millions of women in the U.S.S.R. that in Soviet time have found the way out of dire need, ignorance and injustice. At one of the sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the R.S.F.S.R. Praskovya Nikolayevna took the floor.

"I am a rank-and-file collective farmer from Ryazan Region," she said, "and I want to tell you how we live and work in our village.

"I started working as a dairymaid in the Foundations of Communism Farm in 1931 and have spent the last 25 years at the same job. In that period I have milked more than a million litres (220,000 gallons) for the working people of our country, mainly for Moscow. I am 64 years old and for 50 years I have worked with cows, 25 years on the collective farm and 25 as a hired hand on a kulak farm. It was the collective farm that raised me and put me on my feet as it did all other village women. While working on the collective farm I learned to read and write. Before that I could only scrawl my name but now I write articles for newspapers and magazines and recently my book *Twenty-Four Years on a Dairy Farm* was published in Moscow. Sometimes my husband says to me, 'I never thought you'd become a writer or lecturer, Praskovya.' But I have to write and I have to lecture at institutes and at the Agricultural Exhibition and also to collective farmers and to leading Soviet officials."

Praskovya Nikolayevna obtains a milk yield of 1,100 gallons and more from each of her cows. She is a Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the R.S.F.S.R. and a Hero of Socialist Labour. In the winter of 1956 she was awarded the second gold Hammer and Sickle Medal of a Hero of Socialist Labour. The All-Union Agricultural Exhibition has awarded her the grand gold medal and a Pobeda motor car for her successes in dairy farming. Praskovya Nikolayevna is very proud of her pupils amongst whom there are also Heroes of Socialist Labour.

Zhanna Yenenkova is a young collective farmer from the Komintern Farm in Tambov Region, the farm that is headed by Yevgeniya Ivanovna Andreyeva, who started the patriotic movement to produce 15 tons of meat and 8,800 gallons of milk for every 100 hectares of farmland. Yenenkova is a dairymaid who has never rescued cows from a burning barn, or calves during heavy floods, nor has she ever had to seek lost animals during a storm. She has, fortunately, never had to experience fire, flood or storm. Why, then, one may ask, do they speak of her as a heroine on the collective farm?

For nine years now her fellow-villagers have seen the girl on her way to the dairy farm every day at dawn and at dusk. Every autumn, when the results of the year's work are discussed, the girl's name is in the report. The farmers are pleased to learn that each year her milk record improves: in 1953 the average yield from each of her cows was 533 gallons but in 1956 it was 748 gallons.

The collective farmers know that she will spare no effort to get another twenty gallons from each cow: during haymaking she is in the meadows, when silage is being put in she is there, when the herd is being put into winter quarters she is there again to watch the preparation of feeds for her cows. Any job she has to do she does willingly, quickly and well.

Animal-breeding is hard work. Cow- and calf-hands, herdsmen and shepherds have to work far away from the centre of the farm and themselves have to ensure that the animals are always fed and that they are protected from disease and from wild animals. And how much knowledge is needed! Yenenkova is an acknowledged master of cattle-breeding. Having taken on a job that she believed to be the most important in the collective farm she decided to become perfect in it, to achieve which she spent three years studying at special courses.

The well-being of the collective farm depends on the labour of each of the farmers. The contribution made even by one farmer is seen by all. When a farmer works with a will and is making a constant effort to increase his contri-

bution then the others begin to respect him and to follow his example. Yenenkova, a simple dairymaid, has been elected Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the R.S.F.S.R.

Soviet power is the power of the people, of the workers and peasants, it was established by the people and in the interests of the people, and this makes it invincible.

On Sunday, June 9, 1957, people came to the village of Losyatin, Kiev Region, from neighbouring districts, from Kiev and even from Moscow.

They gathered for the unveiling of the bust of a peasant woman, Stepanida Demidovna Vishtak of that village, team-leader on a collective farm. She was at the unveiling herself, together with her friends, all of them skilled in obtaining big harvests of sugar-beet and maize. In the course of 11 years Stepanida Demidovna has grown more than 15,000 tons of sugar-beet and 1,152 tons of maize. It has been estimated that the beet gave 384 tons of sugar and the cattle fed on the maize produced about 220,000 gallons of milk.

These are the fruits of the labours of one small team that is headed by Stepanida Vishtak. The country has worthily rewarded the heroic labour of this simple collective farmer—she has twice been awarded the Order of Lenin and also the title of Hero of Socialist Labour. A Decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. awarding the second gold star of a Hero said the following: "In commemoration of the heroic labour of Hero of Socialist Labour Vishtak, Stepanida Demidovna, a bronze bust shall be cast and erected on a pedestal in the native village of the heroine with a suitable inscription."

Today the bust stands in the centre of the village, the bust of a farm woman who has been greatly honoured for her selfless work in the collectively-owned fields of the farm.

The Russian writer Saltykov-Shchedrin, in a bitter satire entitled *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, describes a banquet arranged by the teacher Kramolnikov (Rebellious) on the occasion of the fiftieth birthday of the peasant

Golopyatov (Bare-heeled) from the village of Bezkormitsa (Foodless).

In his speech Kramolnikov said: "He, the peasant, does not merely die, he dies without leaving a trace. For he is not a human being even. While he is alive he is a work-unit, often his name is not known. When he dies he is a 'dead body'.... If you throw a stone into the water the empty space that is formed in the middle of the water will, of course, immediately fill in again, but still, for some time you will see circles forming on the surface of the water as evidence that something has happened there. The death of a peasant does not even leave such circles ... no deeds, no memories...."

Our Soviet epoch is as different from the past epoch as day is from night. The talents of workers and peasants are being developed and the fame of their deeds will not die. The work of the simplest tiller of the soil, the rank-and-file collective farmer is a matter of honour and respect. Men and women can earn fame for their work no matter what it is.

It is also worthy of note that the heroes of our collective farms still remain the same simple workers no matter how high the rewards they have received, they do not like loud phrases, they know nothing of self-admiration and they are always striving to do more today than they did yesterday.

In Yuriev District, Tambov Region, Yelena Bogdanova has been fêted; she has devoted 35 years to work on the farm and has milked 264,000 gallons of milk in that period. The Regional Committee of the Communist Party and the Executive Committee of the Regional Soviet sent her telegrams of congratulation. She also received congratulations from Moscow and other cities. At a meeting held in her honour she was congratulated by all the people, young and old. In response to these marks of attention she said that it was, of course, very pleasant to be praised for one's work but that she didn't think she had done everything that could be done, and that she intended to do still better.

There were constant squabbles in the peasant family

in pre-revolutionary Russia: if a son wanted to get married they quarrelled about what land would be his, how the cottage would be divided, how they would share the cow, horse, plough and harrow. It stands to reason that there cannot be anything of the sort in the collective-farm family. If a young pair want to live alone the farm will help them build a house and acquire a cow. Nor can there be any quarrel about land. The farm administration allots them a plot for a kitchen garden and they can work as much as they like on the collectively-owned land and be ensured of a good income.

The collective-farm family is a little collective of its own that sees its well-being in the prosperity of the farm. In the village of Yushta, Ryazan Region, the home of Praskovya Nikolayevna Kovrova of whom we have already spoken, there lives a family of people who have been cattle-breeders for generations, the Kornechikhin family. Twelve members of that family are working on the dairy farm—Stepan Fateyevich is a cow-hand and herdsman, Anna Andreyevna looks after the calves, three of their daughters—Yekaterina, Marya and Anna—are milkmaids and the fourth, Praskovya, formerly also a milkmaid, has obtained the diploma of a zootechnician and has been appointed to manage the dairy farm. Their son Vasily is assistant veterinary surgeon and the other son, Ivan, is a herdsman. Their grandsons Nikolai, Alexander and Ivan are also herdsmen and their granddaughter Marya is a milkmaid.

It is a family that loves and understands the work of breeding cattle so that their work is attended by success. Marya Kornechikhina, for example, gets 650 gallons or more from each of her cows every year. There are members of the Communist Party and the Young Communist League in the family, there is also a deputy to the village Soviet and an exhibitor at the Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow.

June 12, 1955 was a great day for the whole family, young and old alike, for on that day the newspapers published a Decree of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. awarding Orders and medals to the Kornechikhin family

for their successful work over a long period and their successes in the field of cattle-breeding.

This family is no exception. There are families in Soviet villages where fathers and sons, husbands and wives are Heroes of Socialist Labour.

The Kornechikhin family is a family of herdsmen and milkmaids. There was a time when the lads and lasses would gather on the village green to sing songs; one of them was usually about the sad lot of the unfortunate boy who had been made a herdsman for his sins.

The village herdsman lived on what the peasants gave him, he was illiterate and dressed in other people's left-offs. The herdsman today is as highly respected as any other worker in the village; he enjoys the same rights as all others, his work is well paid in cash and kind. His house in the village is no worse than the others, often better, and nobody finds it extraordinary that there are many herdsmen and shepherds amongst the Heroes of Socialist Labour. The electorate of Katta-Kurgan constituency of the Uzbek S.S.R.—thousands of workers, peasants and intellectuals—elected Umar Tamiilzov, a shepherd from the Lenin Collective Farm, their deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

Amongst workers we sometimes hear that one of their number is a hereditary miner, or hereditary metal worker because his father and grandfather before him worked at the same job. Similar expressions are now getting common in the village where a man or woman is not just an hereditary farmer but is an hereditary dairy-farmer, grain-grower, etc. Thousands of students of the higher schools of agricultural sciences return to the villages with their diplomas and work on the collective farms on which they were born where they help the older generation improve harvests, milk yields, etc.

Many young men and women on completing their secondary education elect to work on the farms; on the dairy farms of Ryazan Region alone there are 25,000 young men and women working of whom 5,000 have only recently finished secondary school.

Anastasia Vasyukhina came to the dairy farm of the Soviet Emblem Collective Farm in Mozharsk District, Ryazan Region, in 1954, on finishing school. Her mother had been a cow-hand for many years and did not at first believe her daughter had made the right decision.

"Have you thought it over well? Do you know how hard this work is?"

"Of course I know, Mamma, it isn't any easier for you, is it?"

Anastasia Vasyukhina made her decision, she remained at the dairy farm and was given a few cows that had calved for the first time. Any farmer knows that this is one of the most difficult jobs on the farm: the milkmaid has to display tremendous patience and study the character of each cow in order to get good results.

Anastasia proved to be of stubborn character herself but she listened to the advice of older women who worked with her and very often her mother came to see her at work. As the months passed Anastasia gained experience and very soon her fellow-villagers heard her name on the wireless and read it in the papers. In her first year she obtained 1,108 gallons of milk from each of her cows and a year later she had raised the average yield per cow to 1,345 gallons. She is this year an exhibitor at the Agricultural Exhibition where she earned the Grand Gold Medal and a prize of a motor car. Her selfless and fruitful labour has been awarded with the Order of Lenin.

Anastasia Vasyukhina visits other collective farms in all parts of the country to which she is invited to talk to young milkmaids about her work and experience, tell them of what new methods she has evolved and demonstrate how to milk a cow in order to get better milk yields.

Every day the postman brings dozens of letters to the Soviet Emblem Collective Farm addressed to Anastasia from collective farmers, students and young farming specialists in all parts of the country. They are all anxious to know the secrets of Anastasia's success and in the evening, when she returns home from the dairy farm, she sits down to answer the letters.

At the Brest regional conference of young collective farmers who had finished secondary school, the speakers included young field-farmers, milkmaids and others who told of their first successes on the farms and exchanged ideas and plans. Boris Krokun, a herdsman, speaking of his work on the collective farm, said: "It's good to know that you're needed on the farm."

Very fine words: every man of labour is needed by his country, for the strength and might of the socialist state depend on the efforts of all.

The peasant has been granted all political rights and become an active participant in the government of the state and his work is the object of honour and respect. Conscientious, creative labour is that great force that makes the Soviet state more powerful with each passing year, that ensures material and cultural prosperity for the people. The whole life of a Soviet citizen is permeated with creative effort. The Communist Party relies on this creative initiative and does everything to develop it. The October Revolution has brought up a generation of people who are transforming their native land, who make two ears of corn grow where one grew before.

The name of the Soviet farmer Terenty Semyonovich Maltsev is known today far beyond the borders of his native land: he has made great discoveries in scientific farming and has been elected a member of the Lenin Academy of Agricultural Sciences.

Terenty Semyonovich was the son of a poor farmer who, before the Revolution, often hired himself out as a labourer on the farms of the kulaks in order to eke out a living. He had no money to pay for his children's schooling but the boy Terenty somehow learned to read and write himself. When Soviet power was established in their region Terenty started thinking of how to make the earth yield more grain and how to avoid the frequent harvest failures in that district.

While he was still working on his father's field he began his autumn and spring ploughing two or three weeks earlier than the rest of the farmers and early in spring, without waiting for Easter, as the others did, he harrowed

the black fallow so that it would remain friable and breathe all the time. Maltsev was also the first to start deep ploughing. He was not alone, however, some dozens of men and women joined him in his work. When the collective farms were formed and boundaries were ploughed under in the villages of Kurgan Region young Maltsev was put in charge of field work. They began to till the soil in a new way on the huge collective-farm fields — no longer on the tiny field they had experimented on before. Maltsev began work on the development of varieties of wheat that would stand up to drought and be impervious to early frosts. He developed eight new varieties the year the collective farm was established. The first collective-farm harvest, 18 bushels to the acre, convinced his fellow-farmers that it was worth their while to listen to Terenty Semyonovich's advice.

The years passed and the cottage laboratory grew into a whole experimental station. Maltsev used a new ploughshare that cut from 16 to 24 inches into the soil without turning it over. Many other collective farms in other regions adopted the new plough and began to till the soil after the manner of the collective-farm scientist Maltsev; soon he had thousands of pupils and followers in other parts of the country.

In the summer of 1954 an unusual congress was held in the village of Maltsevo, Shadrinsk District, Kurgan Region. Scientists, collective and state-farm leaders and specialists, MTS workers, leading Communist Party and Soviet workers had come from Moscow and Leningrad, Alma-Ata and Stalinabad to listen to Terenty Semyonovich Maltsev, to learn of new experience gained and high harvest yields achieved by the Lenin Behests Collective Farm.

The congress held in the village of Maltsevo had excellent results and served as an impetus to the creative initiative of both collective farmers and scientists. It was a real triumph both of labour and science.

A scientific congress in a village, like the participation of collective farmers in the work of scientific institutions, is no exception in the U.S.S.R. In the autumn of

1956 scientists from the Lenin Academy of Agricultural Sciences gathered at the Rossia Collective Farm in the village of Grigoropolskaya, Stavropol Territory, for a special session. Academicians, professors, leading scientists from scientific research institutions came to the session in order to consult with the field workers, dairy farmers and agronomists and generalize all that was new in the work of the Rossia Collective Farm.

The Rossia Farm is a big organization—its fields are tilled by over 100 tractors, the grain is reaped by 40 harvester combines, there are 70 motor vehicles in the garage and 170 electric motors that put the various machines in motion. The collective farmers of the Rossia Farm, in conjunction with the scientists, worked out a long-term plan. The Academy was interested in this plan which is of importance to science and arranged for an academic session in the village.

In the Soviet villages today there are over 3,000 scientific centres equipped with laboratories where collective-farm experimenters conduct their work. These cottage laboratories are real scientific centres where many leading scientists have begun their careers. Now that all work in the collective farm is based on scientific achievement the farmer must possess special knowledge. In 1956 and 1957 more than a million and a half men and women from collective farms were studying at three-year courses. During the past few years 2,128,000 men and women have been granted the degree of Master of Farming. For many years now it has been common for collective farmers or MTS mechanics to lecture to audiences of their own fellow-villagers or to the students and faculty of schools of higher learning. Books by agricultural workers are published in large numbers both by Moscow and local publishers; their authors are people of all farm professions from cowherds to collective-farm managers.

Mark Ozyorny, of the village of Mishchurin Rog in Dniepropetrovsk Region, is a collective farmer who has devoted many years to the cultivation of maize and for the last twenty years has regularly gathered big harvests. Not for nothing do the Ukrainians say that if you grow

maize like Ozyorny your field will always give you a harvest. In 1948 Ozyorny obtained 8.8 tons of maize per acre and a year later he raised this to over 9 tons, leaving American records for maize yields far behind.

Mark Ozyorny is an old man. He well remembers the past and counts his real life from the establishment of Soviet power when the peasants of Mishchurin Rog were given land and united to form a collective farm; on the present collective farm, worked by the machines of the MTS, the collective farmers have every opportunity to make experiments and seek new ways of raising the harvest yield. This the peasants of the pre-revolutionary village were unable to do. "My late father," says Ozyorny, "like the other peasants was afraid of every innovation: 'Whether any good will come of it or not we don't know, but if we try we may be left without bread.'"

Mark Ozyorny has lived a long and interesting life. His experiments, his selection work have been developed on a scale that could not even be dreamed of in the past. He who seeks to make innovations always has difficulties to contend with, but Ozyorny has the support of the collective farm and the state. The experiments begun by this collective-farm team-leader in Dniepropetrovsk Region soon spread to thousands of other teams and his name became known in the scientific world. The collective farmer was made a member of the Scientific Council of an agricultural institute, and his lectures there were attended by large audiences. The books written by Hero of Socialist Labour and Stalin Prizewinner M. Y. Ozyorny have been published in many of the languages of the peoples of the Soviet Union in hundreds of thousands of copies.

Large numbers of collective farmers and their children attend higher educational establishments; many go further and present theses for scientific degrees.

Alexander Ivanovich Oskin is a young lecturer of the Chair of Farm Machinery at the Timiryazev Agricultural Academy in Moscow. Every year he spends his summer vacation at the wheel of a harvester combine in the Kuban or in the Orenburg steppes. Last year, 1956, he went with a group of his students to Kustanai Region to help gather

the harvest. In the Mayakovsky State Farm, newly organized on virgin land, he finds the fields and the combines he is accustomed to for, before taking his degree, the young lecturer operated a combine himself, one of the first in our country. The son of a peasant, he has from early youth worked on the land and studied farm machines; he drove a harvester combine on the collective farm fields, and then became a student of the Timiryazev Academy where he now lectures. The fifteen years he spent driving a combine stood him in good stead for when the time came to present a thesis for the degree of Candidate of Technical Sciences he chose as his theme "Experience in the Highly Productive Use of Trailer Grain-Harvesting Combines." He had good material for his thesis: Alexander, with his brother Arkhip, had harvested 165,000 acres and had threshed 2,580,000 bushels of grain. Arkhip Oskin is today the director of a state farm on the virgin lands, the farm where his brother, Alexander Oskin, Candidate of Technical Sciences, helped gather the harvest in 1956. Such is the story of two Soviet village lads.

Farmers of the Ukraine, the Volga and Don regions and of many other republics and regions of our country found the names of their fellow-villagers in the lists published in the newspapers of those tractor- and combine-drivers and mechanics that have been awarded high government Orders and medals for their work on the virgin lands. In the memorable spring of 1954, when the Communist Party put forward the slogan "To the Virgin Lands!", they sent their sons to these regions without hesitation.

Yakov Seminyuta grew up in a peasant family in the great expanses of the Kuban steppes that he loved so well, where he followed the plough and at night took horses out to graze. The people of the MTS at Yeisk saw that the lad was bright and industrious and they sent him to attend courses for tractor-drivers. The years passed and his skill grew, he soon took charge of a whole tractor brigade at the Yeisk MTS in Krasnodar Territory.

In every man's life there are days, hours even, that leave an indelible trace. There was one such day in the life of Seminyuta in March 1954, when he went to the dis-

trict office of the Komsomol to get his ticket for the virgin lands in the East. The huge open spaces of the Altai steppes and the hospitable and industrious people of the region were all after his heart. In one single year Yakov Seminyuta's brigade raised 101,270 acres of land that had never before known the plough. In 1956 collective farmers gathered a harvest of 24 to 28 bushels of select wheat from each of the 4,950 acres ploughed by Seminyuta's brigade.

In February 1957 we saw Yakov Seminyuta in the Kremlin Grand Palace where he was attending a conference of young farmers from the new lands. He was wearing the gold star of a Hero of Socialist Labour. He did not want to talk about his past successes but was full of plans for the future. He took the floor and his audience listened attentively to him when he said that in any year it is possible to get 34 bushels of wheat to the acre on the virgin lands.

Alexei Lagutin arrived at the Jurun MTS in Aktyubinsk Region in the early spring of 1954. There was still deep snow on the fields and winter was fighting back with the last of its frosts. Alexei went straight to the MTS office from the train. The chief mechanic and the engineer proposed that the new arrival take a rest but when, from their conversation, he learned that they were behind schedule with tractor overhauls he said to his new workmates:

"This is no time to rest, I'll be in the workshops tomorrow."

In this way tractor-driver Alexei Lagutin from Ulyanovsk very simply took his place in the family of the MTS in Aktyubinsk Region. He did not fight shy of any job, he worked a lathe, drove a tractor and a harvester combine and was to be seen on the building site. In the course of three years the tractor brigade headed by Lagutin ploughed 12,500 acres of land, almost twice as much as the quota set. Alexei Lagutin has also been awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labour.

Alexei Lagutin, like tens of thousands of others who went to settle on the virgin lands, had earned the respect of the community in which he formerly lived and worked. In Ulyanovsk Region he had had his own house and

vegetable garden, and he had earned good money. What made Lagutin leave his native place, his friends and relatives? It was not, of course, hopes of a better life that led hundreds of thousands of people into the eastern regions of the country, but the knowledge that they, the emissaries of the Communist Party and the Komsomol, could, with their own hands, bring life to untilled soil and place it at the service of man. The heroes of the virgin lands are the pride of the collective-farm village. Their example, their labour heroism, is an inspiration to collective farmers, men and women, to achieve further successes on their farms.

The October Socialist Revolution gave millions of people an opportunity to make good use of their talents, it opened up before them the road to science.

Who does not remember the film *Village School-Teacher* which has been shown in every theatre in the country and still today draws big audiences at repeat shows? The scene is laid in a distant Siberian village, Shatry, before the Revolution. Varvara Martynova, still a young girl, comes to the village as the school-teacher. She finds there a school in a log-hut and people crushed and despondent in their poverty. Children sit in the unheated school, in ragged sheepskins that have belonged to their fathers, amongst them Prov Voronov, a talented boy in whom the new teacher placed great hopes. Prov dreamed of finishing the village school and then continuing his studies. Then we see the teacher on her way to town with her protégé who is to take the entrance examination for the Gymnasium. The boy walked all the way barefoot, his boots, his most precious possession, slung over his shoulder.

Prov was brilliant at the examination and the examiners, government officials in uniform, only shrugged their shoulders, astounded at the knowledge of a lad from the village. They did not, however, accept him into the Gymnasium, there was no place there for a village boy.

The film shows with great truthfulness the further history of the teacher, the village and of Prov Voronov, who became a professor in Soviet times. This is living

history, the story of millions of peasant children for whom the schools were closed in the past.

In the old days it was often very difficult to find a literate person in the village when one of the villagers wanted a letter written, usually only one or two people in the village could so much as sign their own names.

From the tsarist regime Soviet power inherited darkness, ignorance and universal illiteracy and so had to begin from the beginning. In 1919, before the battles with the armies of the intervention were over, the Soviet Government issued a decree which said: "In order that the entire population of the country may consciously participate in political life ... all those between the ages of 8 and 50 who cannot read and write shall be obliged to learn to do so in their native language or in Russian, whichever they desire." This decree is typical of the solicitude of the young Soviet state for the education of the people, of the care taken that the masses of the workers and peasants should be able to participate consciously in political life.

Lenin's sister, Maria Ilyinichna, recalls how Lenin was both touched and excited by a letter from the peasants of the village of Praviye Lamki, in the Levo-Lamki District of Tambov Province. They congratulated him on his birthday and assured him of their readiness "at any second to rush to his aid ... should anybody dare go against our leader and our working class." The authors of the letter said of themselves: "The letter was written by uneducated non-Party people."

Thirty-five years have passed since then. The teachers and pupils of the Levo-Lamki Seven-Year School No. 3 in Tambov Region have established that the letter was drawn up at a meeting of peasants held on April 20, 1922 and was written by a poor peasant, a participant in the Civil War, Yegor Yefimovich Rybin, whose only education was the two classes of the parish church school. At the time when the letter was written there were only two literate people in the village. In the village of Praviye Lamki today there is the huge Bolshevik Collective Farm with three schools, a club and a library. Amongst the

villagers there are many people who have finished secondary school and quite a number have finished college.

If you ask a young collective farmer today what the abbreviation DWI means it is doubtful whether he could tell you. There was a time, however, when there existed a "Down with Illiteracy" Society which did very valuable voluntary work in the villages to put the government decree into effect as quickly as possible. Millions of ABC books and primers, exercise-books, pens, pencils and so on were sent to the villages and everything was done to teach people to read and write. A special *Peasant Newspaper* written in simple language was printed in millions for those learning to read. Communist Party and Komsomol members and teachers taught their fellow-villagers, people came from the towns to teach the villagers to read and write. This difficult task was accomplished within twenty years and millions of people learned to read and write—their eyes were opened.

Another important measure was the introduction of compulsory elementary education for children. The state spent many millions of rubles to build and equip schools and train teachers. Education is free and in many villages there are hostels for children who live far from the school where the children are boarded and where they prepare their lessons under the guidance of a teacher.

In 1956 a session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. adopted an amendment to the Constitution made necessary by the fact that seven-year obligatory education had been effected in town and village and that in the bigger towns ten-year secondary education was the rule. Under the heading "Right to Education" we now read the following:

"This right is ensured by universal compulsory seven-year education; by extensive development of ten-year education; by free education in all schools, higher as well as secondary, by a system of state grants for students of higher schools who excel in their studies; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language, and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine-and-tractor stations, and collective farms

of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people."

In Soviet villages and hamlets in the 1956-57 school year there were 180,200 schools in which 1,500,000 teachers taught 15,800,000 children. Of the latter 1,300,000 children finished the ten-year secondary school that year.

These figures tell better than any words of the cultural revolution that has taken place in the villages.

In addition to the above there are many children of collective farmers attending higher educational establishments: in the agricultural institutes alone there were 150,000 students in that same year; special secondary agricultural schools had an enrolment of 280,500, and if we add those who are studying in other types of schools of farming (including correspondence schools) we get a total of over half a million.

The state spends thousands of millions of rubles on education and the training of specialists every year. The 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. raised the question of introducing universal secondary education in all towns and villages.

For this purpose schools are being built everywhere in the countryside. Never has there been such wide-scale building of village schools anywhere in the world as in the U.S.S.R.

Apart from the extensive system of comprehensive schools for village children there are vocational schools training hundreds of thousands of qualified farm mechanics every year. These schools for farm mechanics of all grades offer free tuition, board and lodging; they are equipped with all modern machinery and special farm laboratories; the teaching staff includes engineers and old, experienced workers. The Aktyubinsk School for Mechanized Farming No. 4 annually graduates over 300 tractor-drivers, combine-drivers and general mechanics. One of the former pupils of this school, Pavel Lakhno, was awarded the Order of Lenin in 1954 for his efficient use of machinery and for threshing an extraordinarily large amount of grain. In 1956 he reaped wheat from an area of 3,070 acres and threshed 1,500 tons of grain. The Agri-

cultural Exhibition in Moscow awarded him a motor car for his good work and in the autumn of 1956 he was awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labour. There are about 900 of these schools spread over the country that train highly qualified specialists for our collective and state farms.

The following table shows how the army of technically trained workers for the farms is growing year by year.

Number of Farm Mechanics Trained (*thousands*)

	1950	*1951*	*1952*	*1953*	*1954*	*1955*	*1956*
Total (all grades)	513	662	633	598	780	578	500
Tractor-drivers	329	390	344	372	372	286	277
Combine-operators and mechanics	46	73	72	78	91	66	23

These and such other trades as electrician, wireless mechanic and motor mechanic are trades that had never even been heard of in the old village. The Lenin Collective Farm in the Kurgan District of Krasnodar Territory is highly mechanized and has over 100 technically trained people. Water is supplied to the dairy farm by electric pumps, feed is prepared by machinery, there is a cableway for feed-distribution and the cows are milked by electric milkers. This farm has its own hydroelectric power station, garage and repair workshops.

Before the Revolution oxen and horses were almost the only motive power known to the village. An occasional locomobile or steam-engine driving a flour mill were to be found on big landed estates and were regarded as marvels by the peasants. Mechanical motive power accounted for less than one per cent of all motive power used. In 1955 motors of all kinds provided 94 per cent of the motive power employed on the farms.

In addition to those villagers who have secondary and higher education, many men and women on our collective

farms take correspondence courses in various subjects and combine work with study. They enjoy very favourable conditions, are able to obtain qualified consultations at the district centres and are granted paid holidays to take their examinations.

At the zonal conference of agricultural workers of the South and of the North Caucasus held in the spring of 1957, one of the speakers was Rimma Orazayeva, a dairymaid from the Kabardinian-Balkar A.S.S.R. At the farm on which she works the average milk yield per cow has been raised by 330 gallons in one year. Orazayeva, who has done much to make this possible, is now in her fifth year as a correspondence student of an agricultural college. Such practical workers, with their experience, make first-class specialists on graduating an institute of higher learning.

A total of 55,400 men and women study through correspondence at 80 agricultural institutes. This, of course, is not the limit; now that many children are electing to stay in the village on graduating from a secondary school, the number of correspondence students will increase year by year.

Of recent years there has been a great increase in building in the villages. A resolution of the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. says that the economic possibilities of many collective farms have increased to such an extent that they may now devote more attention to the building of dwelling-houses, clubs, kindergartens and similar establishments without any detriment to the all-round development of farm production, which must always be given priority.

In the years 1952-55 collective farmers built 2,300,000 dwelling houses but in 1956 alone they built 700,000. The new houses now being built by collective farmers differ greatly from the old Russian log-cabin: they are built according to standard architectural designs.

As incomes increase cultural demands become greater, and at their general meetings collective farmers willingly allot funds from their income to build clubs, community centres, libraries, etc. The Lenin Collective Farm in the Krasnograd District of Kharkov Region recently built a

new club for which they acquired upholstered furniture and velvet for curtains and hangings. The students of the Kharkov Institute of Art, by way of patronage, decorated the club and painted portraits of the leading collective farmers.

There are over 100,000 clubs and community centres in the villages and another 4,500 in district centres. The villagers are also well supplied with books—in 1956 there were 87,000 village libraries with a total of 212,324,000 volumes.

The village of Kolomenskoye is a typical collective-farm village in Moscow Region, and is just like many other Central Russian villages. The one wide street is lined with log-houses with fretwork window-frames and sheet-iron roofs. There is a small garden in front of every house where in summer the air is filled with the fragrance of flowers. Poles carrying power transmission wires line the street. Around the central square are the collective-farm offices, the village shop, the post-office and the school. The finest building in the village is that of the club; it has a hall seating 500, a foyer, reading-room, gymnasium and a room for amateur theatricals. The Kolomenskoye club is a real cultural centre that is famous for its lectures.

There is a lecture society which has forty members—school-teachers, doctors, agronomists, leading farmers and mechanics.

In the village of Kolybelki, Liski District, Voronezh Region, there is a section of the All-Union Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge where teachers, doctors and agricultural specialists lecture to the collective farmers. The village choir of Kolybelki has been famous for forty years already; there are whole families who sing in the choir and there are poets and composers in the village who write songs about collective-farm life.

Our country has always been rich in singers, story-tellers, dancers and musicians but these were only able to give their talents full play after the Revolution. A new life had begun and brought with it new songs.

At festivals held in all republics and regions the village amateur choirs, orchestras, dance troupes and dramatic societies perform before large audiences. The stages of the republican theatres and of the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow have all seen the happy amateur artists from the collective and state farms and MTS's. The brilliant festival of amateur village art of the R.S.F.S.R., recently held, had tens of thousands of participants. The final concert, given in the Bolshoi Theatre, had 2,500 participants—collective farmers and MTS mechanics. The village of Urulga, Chita Region, was represented by its symphony orchestra, the Dawn of Communism Collective Farm, Leningrad Region, by a choir that sang a song they themselves had written and composed.

In the fraternal republics of the Soviet Union, art, national in form and socialist in content, is flourishing on the collective farms. There are collective-farm theatres, ensembles, choirs and orchestras in the most distant regions. Amateur as well as professional companies are to be seen in Moscow at the traditional festivals of national art of the fraternal republics.

In the formerly illiterate villages there are now printing presses that print collective-farm newspapers, for many of the farms find wall-newspapers inadequate and have gone over to printed editions. These newspapers are delivered free of charge to every family and the news they contain comes from numerous village correspondents—farmers, milkmaids, blacksmiths and so on.

The health of the people in town and village is one of the major cares of the Soviet state. This includes medical services for the rural population and the physical training of school children.

In the old, pre-revolutionary villages there were "popular" remedies for almost everything. All manner of "wise women" treated their patients by incantations, by exorcizing and, quite frequently, by mechanically driving out the diseases—they would lay the sick person across the threshold and beat him on the back or roll him along the ground. Women suffered terribly during confinement. Ignorant, illiterate midwives here, too, made use of in-

cantations or gave their patients "medicines" of dubious character. Expectant mothers were kept in insanitary conditions and proper medicines were difficult to obtain. One doctor or doctor's assistant served a whole district. In 1913 the tsarist government spent 69 kopeks per head of the population on health services. Rural hospitals had a total of 69,000 cots for the whole of the huge Russian Empire. The villages knew nothing of maternity hospitals, crèches, kindergartens, sports clubs or anything else of that sort. In his *Development of Capitalism in Russia* Lenin mentions the village of Krasnoye where farming had completely declined and the inhabitants of the village, like those of other villages near the town, worked as saddlers for the merchants of Arzamas; by working 14 hours a day they could earn from 6 to 9 rubles a month. "This is why the saddlers," wrote Lenin, "are pale, weak people and are degenerating physically."

The villagers of Krasnoye today are members of the World October Collective Farm, they are healthy people and there is a healthy red glow to be seen through the tan on the faces of the young men and women. Nor do the middle-aged and elderly people complain of their health. There is an out-patient clinic, a lying-in hospital and a crèche in the village. The collective farm has allotted 1,500,000 rubles to build a community centre where the village people can find amusement and pastimes and also engage in sport activities.

Life in the village has changed completely and it is no wonder that the death-rate in 1956 was only one quarter of that of 1913 and that the average expectation of life has been doubled.

Year by year the Soviet state makes big expenditures on health services. In 1950 the allotment for health services and physical training was 21,400 million rubles; in 1955 it was almost 10,000 million rubles greater, in 1956 the amount was 35,700 million and in 1957, 37,900 million rubles. Directly in the villages there are now over 12,000 local hospitals that not only afford free medical aid to the population but also carry out the necessary prophylactic measures for the prevention of disease. In addition

to this there are the district hospitals, thousands of firs aid centres with hospitalization facilities and lying-hospitals with tens of thousands of cots. Doctors mal frequent tours of the field camps of the farmers and tract brigades. All types of specialists have been made availab to the villagers and there are facilities for speedy labor tory analyses or X-ray photographs.

In recent years the collective farmers themselves hav done a great deal to help restore or maintain the health their fellow-farmers. It is no longer rare to find a holida home or a sanatorium on the territory of a collectiv farm.

The Timiryazev Collective Farm, Gorodets District Gorky Region, has opened a sanatorium in a picturesqu spot on the banks of the Gorky Reservoir. The sanatorium is equipped with facilities for physiotherapy and water therapy. The rooms are well furnished and the collective farmer who is undergoing treatment does not pay for it. The sanatorium of the Budyonny Collective Farm, Bryukhovets District, Krasnodar Territory, is on the sea coast near Anapa while that of the Red October Farm, Vozhgala District, Kirov Region, is in a pine forest.

The general meeting of the Bolshevik Farm in Sumy Region decided to set aside two per cent of the farm's income in cash and kind to form a pension fund for incapacitated members of the farm. Farm members are assured full maintenance in old age and during temporary disablement—in case of illness the farmer will receive pay in accordance with the average number of workdays earned during the preceding six months. This collective farm has established a day off for everybody once a week and annual paid holidays for all members.

Other post-revolutionary innovations in the village are the crèche or nursery and the kindergarten; 300,000 infants are maintained constantly in village crèches and 333,000 in kindergartens; during the periods of heaviest field work the number rises to more than two and a half million. The Ryazan collective farmers have started a movement to provide every collective farm with a perma-

nent crèche for no less than 50 babies. In many districts there are summer camps for older children run jointly by several collective farms.

* * *

A peasant delegation from the German Democratic Republic paid a visit to the Beacon of the Revolution Farm in Krasnodar Territory.

The visitors went over the sheep and dairy farms, visited the fields and in the evening met their jovial hosts in the farm's clubhouse. One of the visitors, an elderly German peasant, expressed the thoughts and feelings of the others when he said: "Your farm has been well named, 'Beacon of the Revolution.' A beacon light reaches out afar showing the way to ships. The Soviet collective farms are bright beacons for us peasants. We shall follow your example."

The rich experience gained in building a new way of life in the U.S.S.R. is the common wealth of all the peoples who are erecting the edifice of socialism in their own lands. The living example of Soviet workers and peasants teaches and helps the fraternal countries to go confidently forward, passing over the ruts and pot-holes that lie in the way and achieve successes in building up industry, agriculture and in all other spheres of building the new way of life.

Hero of Socialist Labour P. A. Prozorov, chairman of the Red October Collective Farm, ends his interesting book on his thirty years' work in the collective farm with a chapter entitled "Dreams of the Future" in which he says that dreams have always played an important part in the development of the collective farm. Dreams of the future are an integral part of collective-farm life, they brought the peasants together in the collective farm, they inspired the people to work for a rapid growth of the farm, they helped in times of difficulty. During the early years of collectivization people dreamed of a big collective farm where scientific farming and highly productive animal husbandry were the rule. That dream has long since come

true, collective-farm harvest yields per acre being far greater than those of the peasant farmer. There was a time when the Vozhgala peasants dreamed of a tractor and a motor lorry and such machines we have had for many years already. The farmers wanted a good club and a cinema, they wanted their own sanatorium and they wanted to live in good apartments. All this has been achieved by the hard work of the farmers with the full support of the government.

"The successes of the Soviet Union, the successes of the Red October Farm are an inspiration to our collective farms to advance to new victories," writes the collective-farm chairman. "As we see these once remote dreams being put into effect we are assured of our strength and have even greater faith in the future. This, in turn, gives rise to new dreams, new ideas about the future."

The collective-farm chairman expressed his idea very well when he said that dreams coming true give rise to new dreams, new plans, new successes and new joys. These dreams are not abstract: they arise out of life itself and are, therefore, real and realizable. The October Revolution produced a man who firmly believes in collective labour, who is able to contribute to the common cause and to defend that cause; such people can turn mountains over, compel swamps to recede, turn rivers back in their paths and irrigate waterless deserts. They are capable of anything that the Communist Party asks of them.

Forty years have passed since the October Socialist Revolution. In the life of a man this is a long time, from the standpoint of history it is infinitesimal. In that brief time, however, Soviet power has made unparalleled changes in economy and culture, in the whole life of the people.

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